

CURZON

THE SECRET HISTORY OF THE MONGOLS

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF CHINGGIS KHAN

Translated, Edited and with an Introduction by

URGUNGE ONON

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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO THE
MONGOLS
OF ALL TIMES, PAST, PRESENT AND
FUTURE

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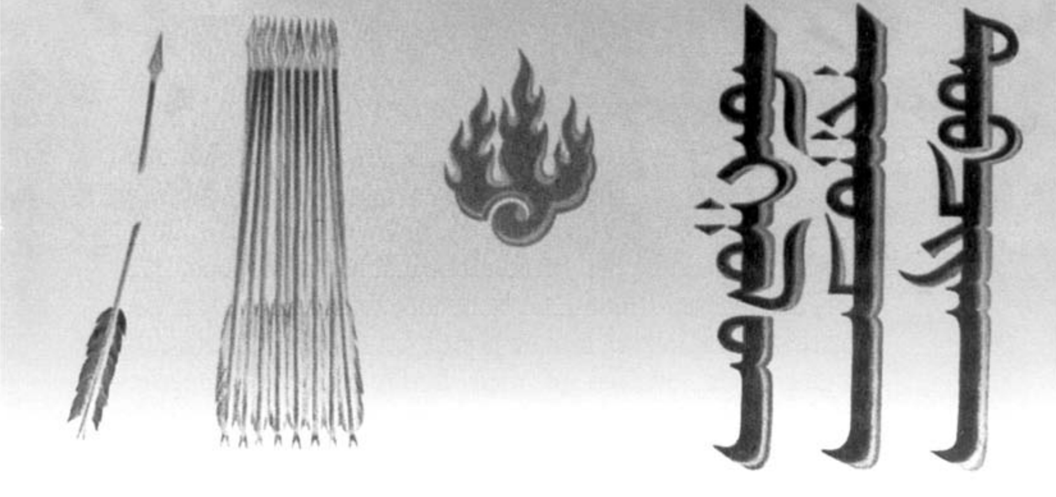
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INTRODUCTION

The East has known only three great men. Sakyamuni was born a prince around 500 BC in what is now Nepal. Distressed by human suffering, he left his family, achieved enlightenment through meditation, and became the Buddha. According to his teachings, life is painful, the origin of pain is desire, the end of pain can be achieved by ending desire, and the way to this is through right living. This philosophy of 'cause and effect' spread northwards into Tibet, where it absorbed the popular Bon religion and changed greatly in nature. The resulting synthesis, known as Lamaism, can be criticised as passive and fatalistic. Lamaism became popular among the Mongols[1] during the reign of Qubilai Qahan (1215–1294).

Confucius was born at around the same time as the Buddha, into China's lower aristocracy. Confucius wanted to restore China to a golden age of peace. He also said that 'the universe belongs to the public', but although he emphasised the need for ethical conduct, he believed implicitly in a society shaped by the hereditary right of aristocrats. He helped to endow Chinese with the idea that China lay at the centre of the universe; and he persuaded ordinary Chinese to confine their loyalties to their family

1 The word 'Mongol' was used as a tribal name until 1206, when Temüjin (Chinggis Qahan) was elevated to Great Qahan. The name then became synonymous with the state until 1271, when the Great Qahan Qubilai introduced the name Yuan Dynasty. Since then, 'Mongol' has been used as a general name for the Mongol people.

and the emperor. Confucianism spread to the countries of the East that practised settled agriculture, but not to nomadic countries like Mongolia.

Temüjin, the personal name of Chinggis Qahan, was born on the sixteenth day of the fourth lunar month in the year 1162 into the family of a tribal leader. Some historians, for example the Persian Rashid al-Din (1247–1318), who was of Jewish origin, say that Chinggis was born earlier, in 1155, the Year of the Pig. Neither Jews nor Muslims (nor, for that matter, Mongols) like pigs, and many Persians deeply hated the Mongols, who set up a dynasty (the Il-Qahan, which ran from 1265 to 1335), in their country. So it was probably with some satisfaction that Rashid al-Din determined 1155 as the year of birth of the Mongol world-conqueror. Chinggis did, however, die in a Pig Year, 1227.

Mongol society developed in three stages. It rose on the basis of a hunting economy in the forest regions to the north of the Mongol heartland. During this period was created the title *mergen,* meaning 'a good hunter' or 'an intelligent person'. When the Mongols emerged from the forests, they created a new title, *ba'atur,* or 'hero', which shows that the distinct Mongol tribes of the day were at war with one another and were probably engaged in a nomadic way of life. Around the eighth century, two new titles appeared: *noyan,* meaning 'lord', and *qan,* usually transcribed in English as 'khan'.

In the sixth century, Turkic nomadic tribes, later known as Orkhon Turkish, moved into the territory of present-day Mongolia and ruled the area until the middle of the seventh century, when they were replaced by the Uighurs (who stayed until the eighth and ninth centuries). By the tenth century, the Liao Dynasty (also known as Kitan) was established in the eastern part of the region, present-day Manchuria. The Kitan were in power from 916 to 1119, when they, in turn, were replaced by another nomadic people, the Jin Dynasty, also known as Altan Ulus (1115–1234).

The Mongols were a small nomadic tribe in the area of Ergön[2] and kölen Na'ur.[3] This mongol tribe moved to the Kelüren,[4] Onon, and Tula[5] districts around the years following 970,[6] and was one of the many tribal peoples shifting about nomadically during this period. The people of the felt walled tents were the Tatars, the Onggirads, the Kereyids, the Naimans, the Tayichi'uds, and the Merkids. All these groups spoke a language akin to that of the Mongols, but they were only included in the category of Mongols after they had been conquered by, or pledged alliance to, the Mongol tribe. Chinggis Qahan's ancestors belonged to the Kiyad group of the Borjigin clan of the Mongol tribe.

Tribal feuds and struggles for power continued for many generations among the tribes, while foreign enemies such as the Liao Dynasty and the Jin ruled them from the east. The Tangqut nation (1002–1227) to the south and the Uighurs to the west were awaiting their turn to attack.

By the twelfth century, however, the nations surrounding the area of present-day Mongolia were growing weaker; this was especially so of the Jin Dynasty, which was at war with the Song Dynasty of southern China. At the same time the Mongols, along with the other nomadic tribes, were becoming stronger economically through their vast herds of livestock. To enjoy this new prosperity, they sought to put an end to tribal warfare and to live in peace with one another, and at the same time to present a united front to external enemies. Chinggis Qahan, born in 1162, fulfilled a need for his people. The many tribes were strong, but lacked a leader to weld them into one.

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2 The Ergüne River.

3 Khölön Buyur Lake.

4 Kherlen.

5 Tu'ula.

6 For this date, see Hua-sai and Dugarjab 1984, p. 271, n. 3.

Temüjin was first elevated as Chinggis Qahan by his tribe, in 1189, and confirmed as such by all the Mongols in 1206, at a great gathering of Mongol nobles and high-ranking commanders of the Mongol cavalry on the Kelüren River. This gathering marked the unification of the Mongol tribes and the birth of the Mongol military machine, and was the first step towards the creation of a new order on the steppe.

Before Chinggis Qahan, the Mongols lacked a sense of their identity as a people. Chinggis' historic role was to endow them with such a sense. His strong identification with his ancestral homelands, almost akin to modern nationalism, is well illustrated by the following incident. He sent a message to three of his followers who had left him to join one of his Mongol rivals. He told them that they were now on their own, but that they should never let anyone other than a Mongol set up camp at the source of the three rivers, the Kelüren, the Tu'ula, and the Onon.

The Mongol tribes professed an ancestral Shamanism; their great deity was the sky, which they worshipped together with the spirits inhabiting the sun, the moon, the stars, the mountains, the water, the trees, and all natural things. As Shamanists, they had no church, nor had they a need for one, since worship was often a matter of immediate communication between the individual and the world of nature; the intermediacy of Shaman priests was an option that Chinggis himself often preferred not to use. For Shamanists, the soul is linked directly to Heaven and the individual is therefore the centre of his own universe. Heaven is nothing more nor less than the consciousness of each one of us. Heaven is our guide; under it we are born free and equal.

Chinggis Qahan was never influenced by the passive philosophy of Buddhism or the rigid doctrines of Confucianism, which reduced the universe to the family or the state. The universe to which Chinggis and the Mongols owed allegiance was bound by neither kin nor place. That is why just two million Mongols, with 129,000 cavalrymen, could establish the largest land empire in world history.

The other great peoples of Asia—for example, the Indians and the Chinese—were never able to match this achievement.

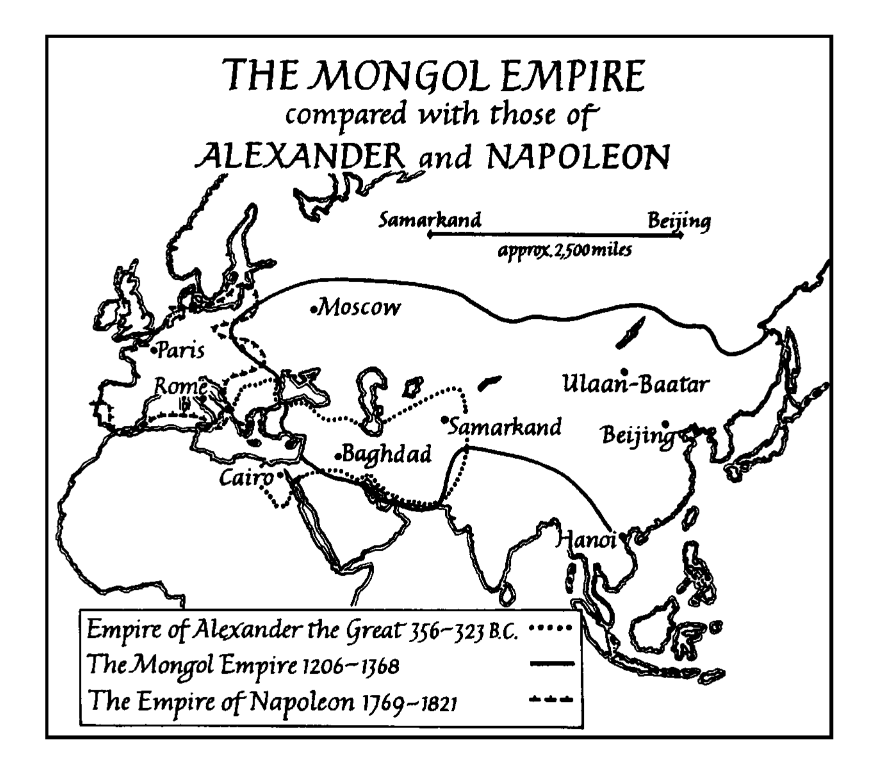
The reason for this failure lies in the Indian and Chinese view of the world, which was more trammelled and restricted than that of the Mongols, who, at the time, lacked even a word for 'country'. (*Ulus,* which in those days meant 'nation', has since acquired the additional meaning of 'country' in modern Mongolian.) As a result, the Mongols came to consider the universe as their *ger* or tent.

The thirteenth-century Mongols represented pastoral civilisation, the eighteenth-century British, oceanic civilisation, and the twentieth-century Americans, scientific civilisation. What motives led them to establish empires? The British and the Americans were seeking to colonise land and space; the Mongols were simply rising to the challenge. 'If Heaven grants a way,' Chinggis told his sons, 'you will embark on campaigns beyond the sea.... Beyond the mountain rocks you will launch campaigns.... Send back news on wings.'

The late Professor Owen Lattimore maintained that Chinggis Qahan was the greatest strategist the world has ever produced. He wrote: 'As a military genius, able to take over new techniques and improve on them, Chinggis stands above Alexander the Great, Hannibal, Caesar, Attila and Napoleon.' (More recently, the *Washington Post* named Chinggis Qahan its Man of the Millennium, describing him as 'an apostle of extremes who embodies the half-civilised, half-savage duality of the human race'. Tongue-in-cheek, the *Post* rejected Columbus for the millennial honour as 'somewhat boring'.)[7]

The map below shows the empires of Alexander the Great, Qubilai Qahan (1215–1294), and Napoleon. The Mongol Empire under Qubilai stretched from Java and Korea in the east to Poland in the west, and from the Arctic Ocean in the north to Persia in the south. The Mongols

7 *Washington Post,* December 31, 1995.



opened a transcontinental road between East and West along which, for the first time in one thousand years, humans and cultural objects and influences could once again be safely exchanged. They linked Asia and Europe by horse relay stations that shortened the distance between the central places of the two continents. During the Mongols' Hungarian campaign in March 1242, news of the death of the Second Great Qahan Ögödei took just forty days to get from the Mongol homeland to Budapest, some 4,000 miles away. According to reports, urgent messages could be transmitted by express couriers at a rate of two hundred or more miles a day.

In the thirteenth century, the Mongol territories abutted the Jin empire (1115–1234) to the south (including the region later known as Manchuria); China, under the Song Dynasty, lay beyond the Jin. The Jin people, originally

nomads, had been heavily influenced by Chinese culture and had come to follow Confucian norms. To the southwest of Mongolia was the Xi Xia Kingdom of the Tanguts. Further west still, around the oases of Central Asia, were the Uighurs, a Turkish people once strong but now in military decline. By the early thirteenth century, fighting between the Jin and the Song had seriously weakened both states. These troubles to the south, and a long period of relative internal peace, had diminished the pressure on the Mongols, who, by the end of the twelfth century, had significantly increased their livestock. To maintain their prosperity (and eventually transform themselves into a world power), they needed dynamic, centralised leadership of the sort that Chinggis Qahan eventually provided.

Chinggis was a far-sighted ruler and a born diplomat, who understood the wishes of his people and led them skilfully. Between the start of his ascendancy and his death in 1227, he killed none of the generals with whom he built his empire, not one of whom betrayed him. (In this respect, empire-builders of the twentieth century would have done well to learn from him.)

Temüjin emerged from a hard childhood as a natural leader and born diplomat. Though said to be illiterate,[8] he knew instinctively how to deal with other tribal chiefs, and, being a born leader himself, was raised first to the position of a tribal Qan in 1189, and then to the exalted role of Great Qahan of Mongolia in 1206, when he was given the title of Chinggis Qahan. By that time he was married (c. 1178) with a son, Jochi.[9]

Chinggis Qahan established his empire and held it together on three vital ties, expressed in the words *quda, anda,* and *nökör.* He used these concepts, familiar to the nomad tribes, with enormous skill and foresight as the

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8 It is generally assumed that Temüjin was illiterate, but there is no written evidence to prove this assumption.

9 See Onon 1990, p. 72, n. 197.

means to unite a sprawling and shifting population and create a superb fighting machine.

Quda was the tie of marriage. Chinggis Qahan made many skilful marriage alliances, as for instance when he gave one of his daughters to Arslang Qan of the Qarlu'ud because the Qan had submitted to him without a fight. A potential enemy thus became a son-in-law.[10]

Anda was the tie of sworn brotherhood, ratified by a valuable gift such as the black sable-skin jacket that Chinggis presented to To'oril Qan of the Kereyid tribe, who was his father's *anda.*[11] In this case, too, an unbreakable bond was created that only death could sever.

Nökör was the tie of friendship and held Chinggis' followers to him in a relationship rather like that between Europe's medieval lord and liegeman. Wielding these three ties, he created a vast network of loyalty and had the confidence of knowing that he could rely on many and farflung tribesmen when he needed their support, held as they all were in the strong web that he had so skilfully woven.

Chinggis Qahan also used his intimate knowledge of tribal affairs and his natural flair for diplomacy to manipulate the Mongols under him. For instance, he joined with the Nestorian Önggüds (who lived in the southern part of Ulaanchab League and the northern part of Ikh Juu League of present-day Inner Mongolia) by a marriage alliance.[12] Later, they acted as guides for him when he attacked the Jin Dynasty in 1211. He used the Uighurs in the same way in his attack on the Kara Kitad in 1218. Those same Kara Kitad then acted in their turn as guides for him and his armies when they moved to the Khwarizm[13] area.

10 See Section 235.

11 See Section 104.

12 See Section 202.

13 Kwarizm.

Before sending in his army to attack, Chinggis despatched agents to discover everything they could of the political, economic, and military situation of the target people. When he learned of the religious conflict between Buddhists and Muslims in the Qara Kitad region, for example, he instructed his commander-in-chief, Lord Jebe, to proclaim complete religious freedom in 1218.

Agents or spies played a vital part in all his wars, and on more than one occasion saved his own life, as when Badai and Kishiliq gave him vital information[14] and when Qoridai of the Gorolas tribe prevented a crisis by providing crucial facts.[15] His spies, it seems, were everywhere—hence Tayan Qahan's wife's remark that 'the Mongols smell bad'.[16]

News flowed through four main channels besides spies. These channels were: the Mongolian caravans, always on the move; prisoners-of-war forced to hand over information; others who voluntarily surrendered; and the members of tribes subjugated by those about to be attacked.

As a Shamanist who lacked religious fervour and believed in the right to worship freely, in 1218 Chinggis proclaimed to his subjects a policy of religious toleration. He saw the wisdom of allowing religious freedom, recognising what a powerful part of society was its religious belief, as when Teb Tenggeri challenged his authority.[17]

The Catholic inquisitors of Europe,' wrote the historian Gibbon, '...might have been confounded by the example of a barbarian, who anticipated the lessons of philosophy and established by his laws a system of pure theism and perfect toleration.'[18] This policy of toleration and respect for all

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14 See Section 169.

15 See Section 141.

16 See Section 189.

17 See Sections 245–246.

18 Quoted in David Morgan, *The Mongols,* London: Blackwell, 1986, p. 41.

religions, continued by Qubilai after his accession, was unique for its time. However, it was motivated less by high mindedness than by expediency, for it was a effective weapon in Chinggis' wars against peoples of other religions, and it enabled Chinggis to manipulate the rivalries and conflicts between Muslims, Buddhists, and Christians in the territories that he conquered.

Iron discipline and matchless speed were not the only reasons for the Mongols' successes in their wars of conquest. These successes also owed much to their employment of foreign collaborators. (Eventually, Turks outnumbered actual Mongols in the Mongol armies.) The Mongols under Chinggis and his successors showed little evidence of the xenophobia that has frequently resulted in the closing of China to outside influences. As a result of their flexible, pragmatic, and receptive attitude, they learned much that was a source of great strength to them while establishing their empire and administering it.

In matters of punishment and reward, Chinggis was known as strict but generous and fair. When the herdsmen Badai and Kishiliq informed him that Ong Qan was about to attack him, and thus saved his life and that of many of his men, he handed them the defeated Ong Qan's property.[19]

Before Chinggis, the basic social and political unit of Mongol society was the patriarchal tribe, which focused the loyalty of each individual. Chinggis broke up this tribal system and replaced it with a feudal army organised according to an artificial decimal system, with units of between ten and ten thousand, centred mainly on the thousands. Within these units, which covered Mongolia's entire manpower, who were universally conscripted, he intermixed the tribes, especially those of his former enemies, which he broke up and distributed across the army. To lead the thousands, he appointed 95 elite commanders who included both tribal chiefs, humble

19 See Section 187.

herdsmen like Badai and Kishiliq, and members of vassal clans. The resulting organisation had some features in common with the general staff of a modern army.

Although he understood the tribal and clan system very well, he was strong and wise enough to know when to dispense with it, and to organise his army in units with commanders who owed their position to merit rather than to inherited chieftainship. His commanders received not only positions of authority but valuable rewards.[20]

Chinggis despised anyone who betrayed his own rightful master, even if that master was his own enemy,[21] and he rewarded enemies who fought bravely against him to allow their own leader to escape. He was ready to see in everyone, friend or foe, the qualities he admired. But he was also fierce in punishing the lapses of his foes.

Under Chinggis in 1204, the Mongols adapted to their own use the Uighur script, which they employed to codify Mongol law, to diffuse the law among the Mongol tribes, and to write this History. (Today this script, dropped by the Communists in favour of the Russian cyrillic alphabet, has been revived in what used to be the Mongolian People's Republic.)

Four items of Mongol law illustrate the character of Mongol society under Chinggis. Any person who eats in front of another without offering that person food must be executed. Anyone caught stealing anything of value may be freed after paying back nine times' its worth. Anyone guilty of hurting a horse's eyes must be executed. And anyone found indulging in homosexual practices should be executed.

After securing his home front by uniting the Mongol tribes, Chinggis first subdued the steppe and desert nomads of Central Asia right up to the Dnieper River in southern Russia and only then turned south to attack the

20 See Section 187.

21 See Section 200.

Jin, which he considered a lesser danger, being somewhat more sedentary. Beijing fell to him in 1215; by 1234, seven years after his death, the Jin empire lay in ruins. From here, the Mongols vaulted south into China proper, where Qubilai established the Yuan Dynasty in 1271 and finally overthrew the Song in 1279.

The horsemanship of the Mongol cavalry is unrivalled in the history of war. Mongol archers conquered the world from their horses, wielding bows with a drawing strength of 166 pounds, accurate over six or seven hundred feet. Chinggis Qahan was one of the world's greatest strategists. He kept his armies constantly on the move, for he feared that, left to themselves without an external enemy to unite them, they would start to fight among themselves. His campaigns were precisely planned and brilliantly executed. His generals were expert at siege warfare (which they learned from the Chinese and used to take walled fortresses), bridge building, and the lightning strike; and they were masters of the art of deception, espionage, and psychological warfare. Field intelligence played a crucial part in Chinggis' wars, enabling him to mount flank attacks with flying horse columns, to encircle the enemy and block his escape, and to synchronise distant forces by signalling with smoke, lanterns, and coloured flags.

By the time of his death, Chinggis had laid the foundations for a vast Eurasian empire that his immediate descendants extended to most of the known world, with the sea as their sole remaining barrier. (The Mongol fleet sent to subdue Japan was destroyed by the *kamikaze* or divine wind, and Mongol ships tried unsuccessfully to subdue Java.)

Reports by non-Mongols of the Mongol campaigns were often grossly prejudiced and exaggerated. According to one, in 1225 the Mongols killed 1,600,000 people in a small city called Herat to the southwest of Samarkand, capital of the territory; another puts the death toll even higher, at 2,400,000. But these reports can hardly be true, for at the time even Samarkand had a population of no more than 200,000. Another account, written in 1240 by

Matthew Paris, a monk at St Albans near London, in his *Chronica Majora,* testifies to European dismay at reports of the Mongol horsemen then ravaging the settlements and cities of Russia. The Mongol horses were so huge, reported Paris, that they ate whole branches and even trees, and could only be mounted by means of three-step ladders. But these are histories written by the vanquished, just as the History is written by the victors.

Chinggis Qahan has become a byword in popular thinking for pitiless and wanton cruelty, but this picture of him is unfair, for his forces rarely used torture. Whether in their Russian or their Chinese campaigns, the Mongols under Chinggis always delivered a full warning to their intended victims: give in within three or six days and we will spare you, otherwise we will fight you to the death and give no quarter. They are generally credited with having kept their word.

The Mongols never fought undeclared wars. If they collected too late to attack, they slept beside their enemy until the morning, after giving full warning of their intentions. [22] However, once battle was engaged, no quarter was given, and there was no concept of a 'gentleman's' engagement. There were no rules of war that could not be broken. Statistics of slaughter are, however, exaggerated.[23]

As for the Mongol ponies, in truth they were rather small, but they were extremely tough, and made up in stamina and endurance for what they lacked in speed. They could gallop for thirty kilometres without pausing.

The Mongols built their empire on the horse, just as the British 700 years later built theirs on ships. The mobility of the Mongol cavalry was matchless, the speed of their horserelays breathtaking. An imperial decree took 40 days to arrive in the extreme western part of the Golden Horde

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22 See Sections 142 and 159.

23 See Li Zefen 1970, p. 454.

(about 4,000 miles distance) in 1241, carried there from Mongolia, by men and horses bred to exertion and hardship.

Chinggis Qahan never fought a battle that he was not sure of winning, and used his troops with cunning as well as power, sending one section to attack from the front while he and his picked forces galloped along seemingly impassable roads and poured down on the enemy from behind. The strategy and tactics of Mongolian warfare are described briefly in Section 195, but Chinggis' two great battles of Chabchiyal[24] and Kwarizm[25] are perfect examples of his style. In the second battle, being so far away from his homeland, he adopted the tactics of a lightning strike. He was aided by newly acquired techniques in bridge-building and the use of gun powder. With his Mongol army, he facilitated communication between Asia and Europe, increasing the intercontinental cultural exchange.

Chinggis and his armies moved with the momentum they had created. His desire to attack further afield resulted in success that, in their turn, encouraged him to continue his campaigns. With his new nation to secure and consolidate, he had to protect his northern and eastern frontiers (in Siberia and Manchuria) and his southern borders with the Jin. He then turned his attention westwards, where he was well aware that nomadic tribes (including the Muslims) might try to imitate him by uniting, and must be dealt with before they grew powerful and aggressive. He also knew that nomadic peoples might easily be absorbed into the southern lands of the Jin and Song Dynasties.

He needed to keep his armies moving for a further reason: left to themselves, in the new and powerful country he had created, they would quite possibly become involved in power struggles that might well lead to civil war. Their

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24 Section 247, Li Zefen 1970, p. 565, map 9, p. 263.

25 Li Zefen 1970, p. 566, map 19, and 430; Saishiyal 1987, pp. 708–709.

energy must be turned outwards. Like empire builders before and after, he persuaded himself that since he had the means he also had the right to conquer new territory and to provide for his men and horses.

Chinggis Qahan once said that 'every man has his use, even if only to gather dried cow dung in the Gobi for fuel'. Perhaps his greatest skill was to make his diverse peoples feel necessary and appreciated. At the time of his death, he had 129,000 Mongol soldiers at his command as empire builders. The population of Mongolia at that time was about 2 million.[26] As well as the three bonds of *quda, anda,* and *nökör,* there was also a wider bond of pride in a new nation, however dimly this was understood or formulated. Ruthless as he was with his enemies, he had a strict code of honour towards his allies, knowing that he relied on them as implicitly as they on him.

The Mongol Empire was not just the biggest empire of its time, but it was the first Asian empire with a parliament since as early as 1206; one might even say that this parliament had its Lords and Commoners. In this respect, the Mongol Assembly was unique in the history of East and Central Asia. At that time, there were three more or less equally balanced powers—lords, commoners, and religious leaders. The Qahan's eldest son did not necessarily succeed his father onto the throne—Chinggis himself designated his third son, Ögödei, to succeed him. (In this sense, too, the Mongol system was quite unusual.) As we know from Section 270 of the History, the second Great Qahan Ögödei thought that he had yet to finish the work that his father had left behind. Chinggis Qahan told his sons just before his death: 'Life is short, I could not conquer all the world. You will have to do it.' From Ögödei down to the Great Qahan Qubilai, each expanded the territory of the Mongolian Empire by further conquests.

26 See Saishiyal 1987, pp. 564–565, n. 1.

The Mongols were known as the Tartars in eastern Europe, especially in Russia. There was a strong Tatar tribe in the eastern part of Mongolia in the thirteenth century. When the Mongols invaded Russia and Europe in 1218–1225 and again in 1237–1242, the Tatar warriors must have gone first, as the vanguard of the main body of Mongol cavalrymen. When the defeated Europeans heard the name Tatar (derived from the Greek word *tartarus,* 'hell'), they simply transferred it to the Mongols.

The Mongols wished to know how much territory a people on horseback could conquer. The result was that they widened the road between the continents, so that, in the long run, the peoples of Asia and Europe could move about the world more freely.

In the thirteenth century, when the Mongols wrote their History, they were strongly influenced by Shamanism. One of the few peoples of the twentieth century not exposed to doctrines and ideologies, the Dawr [Da'ur] Mongols are the only ones capable of explaining the History correctly. This is because people from other parts of Mongolia, non-Dawr Mongols, have been influenced by either Buddhism or Confucianism or communism or a combination of two or more of these systems of thought. Linguistically, non-Dawr Mongols have been influenced by the Orkhon Turks, who reached Mongol lands in the sixth century and spread elements of their Orkhon dialect to the Mongols. The Dawrs, by contrast, isolated as they were from the main body of Mongols, have retained their old dialects, which resemble the language of the History.

As a Shamanist myself, I keep three things in the forefront of my mind: we humans, having long been ruled by logic, including doctrine, should now rule logic; I am the centre of the universe, as you are, too, and as is every human being; and I shall face the challenge in life, as you will too.

Whether you succeed or fail in your objectives will depend above all on the balance and timing of your action.

Mongolia is a land of clear blue skies, treeless green pasture, and, to the south, of stony desert. It is cold, dry,

and windy for most of the year, but a paradise on earth in July and August. On a hot summer day, sitting among the desert stones and watching the wonderful array of mirages rise before you from the sand, or shimmer in the distance like sheets of water, you are overcome by a delight beyond words. The stars seem close enough to touch to those sitting silently on the sand at night, soothed into a state of tranquil clarity by the chirping of cicadas.

The stars smile down at you,
the cicadas lull you into sleep;
now and then the land of qahans
changes its guard.
As the mirages rise before your eyes
you forget your age.
The land of the camel
moves forwards and backwards.[27]

The History

This book, known to Mongols as the *Tobchi'an [Tobcha'an]* or 'History', has appeared under a variety of names, including *The Secret History of the Mongols, The Life of Chinggis Qahan, The True Record of Chinggis Qahan,* and *The Secret History of the Yuan Dynasty.* It has been translated into many languages, including English, Japanese, French, German, Chinese, Russian, Hungarian, and Polish. Like Chinggis himself, the book is highly controversial. We cannot be sure when it was written or who wrote it. I myself argue below that it was written in 1228, but other scholars date it to 1240 or 1323. Whatever the case, the book is unique, as the only available account of the life of Chinggis Qahan.

In 1990, I published an English translation of the 1980 Mongol edition of the *History,* revised by Eldengtei and

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27 Poem by Urgunge Onon.

Oyuundalai for the Inner Mongolian People's Press. Mine was the third English translation after those by Igor de Rachewiltz and Francis Woodman Cleaves (see the bibliography). This, then, is the fourth English-language version of the *History,* recast from my 1990 translation.

No one has so far managed to determine exactly who wrote the History. We do know, however, the time, place and circumstances under which it was written. The colophon to Section 282, the final section of the History, reads:

[We] finished writing [this History] at the time of the Great Assembly, in the Year of the Rat[28] and the Month of the Roebuck, when the palaces were being set up at Dolo'anboldaq of Köde'e-aral on the Kelüren [River] between two [places called] Shilginchek.

There were Rat Years in 1228, 1240, 1252, 1264, 1276, and so on, in multiples of twelve. Is it possible to determine in which particular Rat Year the History was written?

The Mongolian Great Assembly first convened in 1206; at it, the Mongols elected Temüjin as Great Qahan. At the next Great Assembly, Chinggis' youngest son, Tolui, who was regent in 1227–1228, took part in the election. Since Tolui died in 1232, the Great Assembly must have taken place in 1228. In that year, from the twelfth day of the seventh lunar month (August 25) 1227 to the seventh lunar month of 1228, Mongols were mourning the death of Chinggis Qahan. Mongolia was internally and externally at peace, and the Mongols had to elect a new Qahan.

Some sources maintain that Ögödei became the Great Qahan in 1229. It is possible that the Great Assembly convened in 1228 and continued meeting until 1229,

28 The *shuxiang* (or *shengxiao*) are the twelve animals representing the cycle of Twelve Branches (or Horary Characters), starting with the Rat and ending with the Boar. Each animal represents a person's year of birth. People whose age difference is twelve or a multiple of twelve have the same animal as their *shuxiang*. (The Year of the Rat falls, for example, in 1228, 1240, 1252, and so on.)

before the final election. According to tradition, if a man became Qahan in the first part of the year, his reign started in the same year; if in the latter part of the year, it started in the following year.

Since a Great Assembly almost certainly took place in 1228, at Köde'e-aral, the History was, in all probability, written in that year, in its seventh (or roebuck) month, at Köde'earal on the Kerülen River.

Some scholars have argued that the History was written in 1240, since it fails to record the death of the second Great Qahan Ögödei (reigned 1228–1241). However, this theory is unlikely, and for the following three reasons.

First, the Great Qahan Ögödei and the influential princes in the Borjigin clan, together with the sons-in-law of the royal family and the great commanders of the Mongol cavalry, met in Great Assembly in 1235 to lay plans to invade Europe. Mongol cavalrymen started to move towards Europe in 1237. By 1240, they were fighting the army of the Song Dynasty in southwestern China; a large Mongol cavalry detachment was fighting in Armenia under the famous Commander Chormaqan.[29] The main body of Mongol cavalry was commanded by Prince Batu. The elder sons of Chinggis' four sons were also with Prince Batu (the first ruler of the Golden Horde in Russia). This campaign was the second biggest in eastern Europe and Russia. Mongol cavalrymen entered Poland in 1240–1241. After learning of the death of the second Great Qahan Ögödei, the Mongols withdrew from Hungary in May 1242. Without the participation of the Mongol princes and great generals such as Sübe'edei and Chormaqan, there would have been no Great Assembly. Furthermore, there was at that time no need for a new Qahan to be elected or for plans to be laid to invade other countries.

Second, the author (or authors) of the History recorded the deaths of none of the later qahans—the second Great

29 Eldengtei et al. 1991, pp. 643–644.

Qahan Ögödei, the third Great Qahan Güyük (reigned 1246–1248), or the fourth Great Qahan Möngke (reigned 1251–1259).

Third, a record shows that there was no Great Assembly in 1240, and another that there was a Great Assembly in 1235, at which the Mongols discussed the second invasion of Europe.

Could the History have been written in Rat Year 1252? Hardly, and for this reason. Möngge, the eldest son of Tolui, became Great Qahan in the sixth lunar month of 1251. He executed many of his opponents at the Mongol court to consolidate his throne. From the sixth lunar month of 1251 to the seventh lunar month of 1252,[30] he would have had neither the time nor the wish to commission a History.

What about Rat Year 1264? Ariböke was elected the Great Qahan by the Mongol lords in Mongolia proper, where the Great Assembly met, but his elder brother, the Great Qahan Qubilai, fought with him over the throne. In the end, Ariböke yielded, in 1264—a Rat Year. So neither man could have commissioned the writing of the History in 1264.

And the Rat Year 1276? In 1276, the Mongol army of the Great Qahan Qubilai was fighting the Song army. There would have been no time for writing the History, nor any wish on the part of the Great Qahan to have it written.

Rat Year 1324 was the first Reign Year of the Great Qahan Yesüntemür. According to some scholars, he may have been the commissioner of the History. After the Great Qahan Gegegen Shidibal was killed in the eighth lunar month in 1323, on the fourth day of the ninth lunar month, Yesüntemür became Great Qahan in Shangdu (the northern capital), in a procedure that was greatly hurried. On the thirteenth day of the eleventh lunar month of 1323,

30 The History was finished in the seventh lunar month of 1228.

31 For details of the 1324 Rat Year, see Irenchin 1984, p. 82.

Yesüntemür went to Daidü (Beijing). He would have had no time to convene a Great Assembly, nor to have the History written. In the seventh lunar month of 1324, he was in Daidü, not in Mongolia proper, where he would have needed to be in order to convene the Great Assembly. (The History was completed in the seventh lunar month.)[31]

The most likely date of writing is therefore 1228. The Great Assemblies were probably held in the capital, Qara Qorum, built in 1235–1236. The 1235 Great Assembly was possibly held in Qara Qorum.

The History is surrounded by numerous mysteries, not least of which is its authorship. We do not know who wrote the History, but we do know that the author belonged to Chinggis' clan, the Borjigin, named after a small river in the Khölön Buyr area of eastern Mongolia, now called Borjiqon. In the old days, according to tradition, only a member of a clan would record the affairs of that clan. This practice was due to the lack of a written language; as a consequence, children learned only by word of mouth from their parents about their tribe and ancestors. Children had to remember the names of all the members of their tribe and of their forebears, and about various important events in the tribe's history. The History shows that 22 generations preceded Chinggis, whose names the children learned by heart. After the History was written, in the thirteenth century, fourteen books[32] were written on Mongolian history, twelve of them on the Borjigin clan. The best-known of the fourteen is the *Golden History of the*

32 Eldengtei et al. 1991, pp. 714–715.

33 Lubsangdanjin had access to an original copy of the History. He copied three quarters of the text for his own edition (most probably printed around 1649–1736 or 1651–1675). Even now, the original remains unfound. Anyone wishing to translate the History is obliged to make a page-by-page study of the Golden History. For example, Section 63 of the History reads 'I talked to the people about my dream' whereas the Golden History reads 'I have not talked to the people about my dream.' The latter makes more sense in the context.

Mongols, written between 1649–1736 or 1651–1675 by Lubsangdanjin.[33]

The History itself was written in the first person, unlike other histories, which were written in the third. Here are four examples of the first-person style of writing:

1 'Belgütei, who was holding Chinggis Qahan's geldings [ready], had been in charge of our side of the feast.'[34]
2 'Senggüm, who thought highly of himself [and looked down on us], said'[35]
3 '...who had served at the side of my father the qan.'[36]
4 '[We] finished writing [this History] at the time of the Great Assembly'[37]

The fourth example shows that the author(s) took part in the 1228 Great Assembly, and therefore must have been important personages. I conclude that the History was written by a member or members of the Borgijin clan of Chinggis Qahan.

The History was written in the Uighuro-Mongol (Uighurjin Mongol) script by Mongol scholars. Long before 1206, when the Mongol court adopted the Uighur script, the Naimans were already using it.[38] A Uighur scholar called Tatatungga, who submitted to Temüjin in 1204, was appointed as a high-ranking official in charge of official seals and taught the script to the young nobles of the Mongol tribe. Experts on the History agree that it was written in the Uighuro-Mongol (Uighurjin Mongol) script.

We know from source materials that each Mongol Qahan (from Chinggis onwards) commissioned a history to record

34 Section 131.

35 Section 165.

36 Section269.

37 Section282.

38 The Mongolian Naiman and Önggüd tribes adopted the Uighurjin Mongol script in around the tenth century. For details, see Saishiyal 1987, pp. 537–559.

events in his reign. Unfortunately, we do not have any biographical or historical records other than the present History (which covers the period from the late eighth century to the middle of the thirteenth century). Two events illustrate the nature of the History:

(A) Qutuqtu Qahan (1329), having banished his son, whom he thought illegitimate, summoned a minister who was head of the College of Literature, and ordered him, together with another minister, to record the facts about his son in the History. The History therefore apparently recorded important events at the imperial court.[39]

(B) In April 1331, Jaya'atu Qahan (1304–1332)[40] decreed that a book titled *Delekhei-i jarchimlakhu ikhe dürim* (*Jing shi da dian*—Compendium of Government) should be written. A famous Chinese scholar named Yu-chi headed the project. Because of the lack of fresh materials on Chinggis Qahan and his period, Yu-chi told Jaya'atu Qahan that he would like to read and use the royal book (the History), especially those sections dealing with Chinggis Qahan, as source materials for the project. The Qahan granted the request but two Mongol scholars named Tashiqaya and Yabuqa, keepers of the History at the imperial library, refused to give it to Yu-chi, on the grounds that its contents were private and should not be seen and copied by a foreigner.[41]

In 1866, the Archimandrite Palladius, a scholar-priest attached to the Russian mission in Beijing, discovered an abridged Chinese translation copy of the History, hitherto lost, in the imperial archive. He translated the text into his native Russian. A copy of the *Golden History*—known as

39 For details, see Dorontib 1979, p. 2.

40 For this date, see Gao Wende and Cai Zhichun 1979, p. 111.

41 See Dorontib 1979, pp. 2 and 38–39.

42 There are two possible dates for the writing of the *Golden History,* pp. 1649–1736; and 1651–75. For details, see Saishiyal 1987, p. 52.

43 See Irinchin 1987, p. 15.

Lu. Altan Tobchi [The Golden History][42]—was discovered in the Mongolian People's Republic in 1926 and subsequently published by Harvard University Press in 1952. Threequarters of the History was used in the *Golden History*.[43] This fact was actually stated as early as 1936 by Z. Ts. Zamsarano in his *Mongol'skie letopisi XVII veka*[44] (English translation 1955). Therefore the Altan Tobchi was derived from the original History.

The History was probably written in at least two stages. During the first stage, from 1227 to 1228, Sections 1–58, covering Chinggis' ancestors, were composed; so were Sections 59–268, covering the life of the Great Qahan, the main body of the History, and Section 282, which constitutes the colophon.

Later on (after 1228), in a second stage of writing, which lasted until 1258 or later (as evidenced by a reference to the dispatching of the Mongol army to Korea in 1258), the author (or authors) inserted Sections 269–281 between Sections 268 and 282. This second stage was completed during the reigns of the four great Qahans: Chinggis (1206–1227); Ögödei 1228–1241); Güyük (reigned 1246–1248); and Möngke (reigned 1251–1259).

Unfortunately, the original text, especially Sections 269–281 of it, was revised in the years 1228–1260. For example: Chinggis Qahan's father Yisügei was never a qan, but he appears in Section 96 as 'Yisügei Qahan'; Ögödei appears as 'Ögödei Qahan' in Section 198, long before he became a qan.

So the main body of the History consists of Sections 1–268 together with Section 282. This explanation supports the theory that the *Golden History* includes a revision of the History that has never been discovered. During the second stage of the writing of the History, the authors probably revised the original text for some political reason. It is also likely that various authors unintentionally confused the dates of events.

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44 Trudy Instituta Vostokovedeniya XVI, Akad. Nauk, Moscow-Leningrad, 1936.

After the Mongols withdrew to Mongolia from China in 1368, a copy of the History reached China sometime between 1368 and 1382. The Mongols left the original History in Mongolia while they were in power in China. The Mongols always kept hidden the location of the graves of the Qahans, the great seals of the Mongol dynasties, and secret documents such as the History.

When the Mongol scholar Go'a Uqa'an-qee of Gorlos and the Uighur scholar Masha-Yi-hei Mahamad[45] compiled the Sino-Barbarian Glossaries[46] in China during the Ming Dynasty, in 1382, they used the History as a reference. Between 1368 and 1382, they also made a complete transliteration, an interlinear translation (of each word), and an abridged translation of each section of the History to train the officials of the Ming Dynasty as translators and interpreters. They arbitrarily divided the History into 12 (or 15) chapters and 282 sections and gave it a new title—*Yuan chao mi shi* ('Secret History of the Yuan Dynasty,' in Chinese) and a subtitle in Chinese transliteration—*Mongqolun niqucha to(b)cha'an* (Secret History of the Mongols). Go'a Uqa'an-qee and Masha Yi-hei Mahamad used the term 'secret' in the new Chinese titles because the History was kept secret in the Mongol imperial library.

On reading the opening sentence of the Chinese transliteration of the History, some scholars considered that 'the origins (ancestors) of Chinggis Qahan' was perhaps the original title of the History. As we know, it was an old Chinese tradition to give prominence to high-ranking or senior persons by starting a new line whenever they were mentioned. In my opinion, the author(s) of the History simply recorded the factual information in continuous prose form without any formal chapters or sections. There was simply one title—*Tobcha'an [Tobchiyan],* 'the History'.

45 For the name Mahamad, see Irenchin 1984, p. 78.

46 Cleaves 1982, p. xxiii.

The purpose of the History was to record the everyday private lives of Borjigin clan members, and especially of Chinggis Qahan. The History was a sort of diary of the Mongol court. It also covered great events of the day, to teach the descendants of the Great Qahan Chinggis how to consolidate the Empire. Reading the History from Section 1 to Section 268, one feels like a participant in the events that it records, and that a single person is telling the story. In Sections 269–281, however, the text has been altered, the dates have been confused, and the impact of the narrative has been diluted.

The History depicts personal events in Chinggis Qahan's life that were evidently considered private, for some of the actions recorded offended against Mongol morality:

1 In Section 56, Yisügei Ba'atar (Chinggis' father) abducts the wife of Chiledü of the Merkids and made her his own wife (and Chinggis' mother).
2 In Sections 7–8, Yisügei Ba'atar is poisoned by the Tatar tribe, and dies.
3 In Section 77, Temüjin kills his half-brother on account of a bird.
4 In Sections 80–87, Temüjin is captured by the Tayichi'uts and humiliated.
5 In Section 101, Temüjin's wife, Börte, is taken away by the Merkids.
6 Sections 245–246 recount the power struggles between Chinggis Qahan and Teb Tenggeri (the Master Shaman).
7 In Sections 254–255, Chinggis Qahan's sons fight each other for the right to succeed him on the throne.

These seven events took place during the lifetime of the Chinggis Qahan. One event, however, happened during the reign of Ögödei Qahan (the second great Qahan); this event shows that the Mongols were very clear about whether something concerned only the family or others outside the family, too. The elder son of Ögödei Qahan, Güyük (who eventually became the third Qahan), was sent to fight in

Europe under Prince Batu. Güyük had a big argument with Batu. Batu reported the argument to Ögödei Qahan, who wanted to punish Güyük. At that point, the other princes and lords petitioned Ögödei Qahan as follows: '[According to] a decree issued by your father, Chinggis Qahan, matters of the field should be judged only in the field and matters of the home should be judged only in the home If the Qahan favours us, would it [not] suffice to send [Güyük] to Batu [in Russia]…? The Qahan agreed, and [said]: I leave both Güyük and Harqasun to Batu.'[47]

Mongol Sources in the Thirteenth Century

A. *Tobchi'an* ('The History'), anonymous, 1228.

B. *The War Record of the Holy Hero (Chinggis Qahan),* by Qoriqosun, 1266–1273.[48] This book was published by the Institute of National History established by Qubilai Qahan at Daidü in 1264. For details, see *The War Record of the Holy Hero,* p. 4. Qoriqosun was a chairman of the Institute of National History after 1264. He was not only a Mongol scholar but a court painter who painted the portrait of Chinggis Qahan and other Qahans in 1278–1279. His portrait of Chinggis was copied by other painters in the Ming Dynasty (1369–1644). (I used it to illustrate my 1990 translation of *The History and the Life of Chinggis Qahan*. [49]) Qoriqosun was the great great grandson of Kishilig, who, together with Badai, reported the imminence of an attack on Chinggis Qahan by Ong Qahan. This action saved Chinggis' life and army.[50]

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47 See Section 277.

48 Zhao Gong 1985, p. 4.

49 For details, see Saisha'al 1987, vol. 1, p. 5J.

50 See Sections 169–170 of the History.

51 For the Institute of National History, see Zhao Gong 1985, pp. 4–5.

C. *The Real History of the Mongol Qahans,* published by the Institute of National History in 1303–1304 in Mongol and Chinese by an anonymous author. Unfortunately, this work has not been found.[51]

My translation is from the 1980 edition of The Secret History of the Mongols, revised and annotated by Eldengtei and Ardajab.[52] My second main source of material was the Selected Translation of the Vocabulary of the Secret History of the Mongols,[53] by Eldengtei, Oyuundalai and Asaraltu. I am grateful to the annotators and translators of the above mentioned two books.

I would particularly like to thank, and to commemorate, the late Eldengtei, whose academic achievements were outstanding. His father, the late Duke Chend (Tsend Gün), was the first Mongolian scholar to transliterate the History into modern Mongolian (in 1915–1917).[54] His grandson, Ardajab, jointly annotated the publication. Without these two books[55] I could not have made a satisfactory translation. A further transliteration was done by Bökekeshig in 1941, in Kailu, Manchuria.

Here I would like to make some observations on the original text of the History. I found very few mistakes in the text itself. One small error: the two-word sentence *dabchitu qor*[56] is mistranslated as 'a quiver with a cover', surely an error, for *dabchi* means the nock (end) of a bow. (In any case, I doubt if a quiver had a cover.) Thus I have translated *dabchitu qor* as 'the bow-nock and the quiver', ignoring the word *tu,* 'with'. There are, by contrast, numerous errors in the interlinear translations, of which I will give just two examples. In Section 106, *qara'atu tuk* is

52 Eldengtei et al., published by the Inner Mongolian People's Publishing House, Khökh Khot, 1986.

53 Eldengtei et al. 1980.

54 For details, see Brown and Onon 1976, p. 749, n. 46.

55 I.e., Eldengtei et al. 1980 and Eldengtei and Ardajab 1986.

56 Section 105.

rendered as ‘standard visible from afar’, whereas the correct meaning is ‘spear tipped banner’. In Section 251, Ile and Qada are (correctly) rendered as the names of two Jin Dynasty commanders, but in Section 272 the same two words are translated as ‘open’ and ‘visible’.

In reading the History, I have the advantage of being a Dawr[57] Mongol. The Dawrs were isolated from the main body of the Mongols for more than one thousand years, starting in the sixth century, when nomadic Turkic tribes penetrated present-day Mongolia. Scholars of Inner Mongolia confirmed in 1955 that the Dawrs speak an independent dialect of the Mongolian language, untouched by Orkhon Turkish and akin to the language of the History. For example, the word *kasoo,* ‘iron’, is retained in Dawr and in the Kitan language, but becomes *temür* in the Altaic language. Other words in the History are familiar to me from my early childhood.

The portrait of Chinggis Qahan on the dust jacket of my translation of the History published in 1990 was painted by the court painter Qoriqosun in 1278–1279.[58]

At this point, I would like to propose a new explanation of the meaning of the words ‘Chinggis’ and ‘Mongol’.

Before Buddhism penetrated Mongolia in the thirteenth century, the Mongol religion was Shamanism, which dominated the political, economical and spiritual life of the country. The Shamanist respected and worshipped the Heavens and believed that everything, including both happiness and suffering, derived from the Heavens. However, they also believed that these Heavens contained not just one but ninety-nine *tenggeri* (or ‘almighty spirits’).

Buddhism never penetrated the Dawr region, where Shamanism was practised well into the twentieth century. The Dawr Mongols believed that there were at least nine levels of Heavens.

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57 I.e., Da’ur.

58 For details see Saishiyal 1987, vol. 1, pp. 61–67. For the painting, see ibid., PJ6.

Scholars working on the History have proposed various meanings for the word 'Chinggis', but most agree that it means 'firm' or 'strong'. Some equate it with *tenggis,* meaning 'lake' or 'ocean'.

From ancient times right through to the thirteenth century, the Mongol rulers used three titles, namely Qan, Qahan, or Gür Qan. *Gür* in Gür Qan means 'all'. Thus Gür Qan means 'Qan of all the people'. After the thirteenth century, however, the title of Gür Qan gradually fell into disuse.

In Shamanism, the *tenggeri* (almighty spirits) ruled all above (in space and in the heavens), while the *chinggis* (almighty spirits) ruled all below (i.e., the land).

So that Temüjin could rule the land, the Mongols conferred on him the title 'Chinggis'. The title Gür Qan was not available at the time, since Jamuqa (who figures in the History) already held it (starting in 1201).

In 1189 and 1206, in order to distinguish between the ruler above and the ruler below, the Mongols gave Temüjin the new title of Cingis (Chinggis). There are two references in old Mongol documents that explain the meaning of the word Chinggis. *Chinggis Temür etsegtü ching chuluun ekhtü* means 'Chinggis had an iron-hard father and a solid stonelike mother'. The word Chinggis derives from the plural form of *ching,* 'firm', which implies strength or toughness when applied to people or animate objects.[59]

The word Mongol may have derived from the place-name Onongol, 'Onon River'. There are no written sources on the meaning of 'Onon', but *gol* means 'river'. *Onon* may have meant 'boy' before the thirteenth century, when the Mongol language was first reduced to writing.

In Mongol, an initial *o* or *u* was dropped before an *n* or *m,* which two consonants are interchangeable.

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59 For details, see Eldengtei and Ardajab 1986, p. 2, n. 3.

60 See Section 65.

61 See Sagang-sechin 1981, pp. 285, 324, and 351.

At around the time of the writing of the History, the word *onon* was pronounced *nu'un*[60] and meant 'boy'; in around 1662, it was pronounced *nigun,*[61] still with the meaning 'boy'. In the Dawr Mongol dialect today, Onon is pronounced *no'on,* 'boy'. The Dawrs moved along a river they called 'Na'un' (Onon). (It had been called 'Na'u' in 1213.)[62]

Thus the word 'Mongol' may have originally meant 'Boy River', by the way of a series transformations from Onongol through Nongol to Mongol. These transformations are further illustrated by the following examples:

onokhu to nokhu ['to hit the target'];
umartakhu to martakhu ('to forget');
tansag to tamsag ('beautiful');
dumda to dunda ('to meddle').

Some Mongol scholars argue that the word 'Mongol' derives from *möngkh* gol, 'eternal heart', or *möngkh tengeriin gal,* 'the eternal heavenly fire'.

Some Problems of Interpretation

Here, I suggest explanations for some words not adequately explained in publications by Mongol scholars.

1)
The particle Ü (Section 59)

The particle 'Ü' was used as an honorary prefix in the History. Given that *ge* indicated male gender and *jin* female gender, Temüjin Üge was an honorary address for Temüjin, while Börte Üjin was an honorary address for Börte. (Some scholars, however, maintain that Üjin was derived from the Chinese *furen,* 'lady'; others, that *üge*

62 See Section 253.

meant 'wise lord' or 'high rank' in the Orkhon Turkish dialect.

2)
Qa'ulqa (Sections 56 and 75)

Qa'ulqa means 'road,' but was also read *qa'alqa*. In Section 38, there is a verb *qa'ulju* meaning 'galloping'. The two words were clearly related. Their common stem is *qa'ul,* 'gallop' or 'run'.

3)
Kegesü (Section 67 of the History)

Kegesü meant enmity, but the basic common meaning of this word was 'spoke' (of a cart wheel).

4)
Üyisüldün (Section 67)

Üyisüldün meant 'secretly harming [him]', but *üyisü* as a noun means 'birch bark'. Why did *kegesü* and *üyisüldün* mean 'enmity' and 'secretly harming'? Spokes and birch bark were used as instruments of torture before the thirteenth century. The Mongol lords punished people by tying them to the spokes of cart-wheels in the cold winter nights and wrapped them in birch bark on hot summer days.

5)
Qa'ulqa[63] (Section 75)

Qa'ulqa was an adjective or noun. In the Dawr dialect, *ga'ulawu* means 'to admire'. Here, *qa'ulqa* means 'admirable'.

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63 Ga'ula.

6)
Turqaq (Section 79)

Turqaq meant 'followers' in Section 79. In Sections 191 and 224, it meant 'night-watchman' in the Orkhon Turkish dialect, but the interlinear Chinese gave the two Chinese characters *san,* 'disperse', and *ban,* 'unit', instead of *yeban,* 'night shift'.

7)
Bököre and *cekere* (Section 96)

Bököre, given as 'kidney' in the interlinear Chinese, should be 'bowels' (or 'anus'). *Cekere,* given as 'diaphragm', should be 'backbone'. In the text, a word for 'hips' follows the word *bököre,* while a word for 'chest' follows the word *cekere.* This parallelism suggests that the other must mean 'anus' and 'backbone'. In the Dawr Mongol dialect, 'bowels' are *bokor, e* being a dative case ending. As far as I know, the word *bokor* is retained only in the Dawr area. *Cekere* is pronounced *seker'* in most parts of Mongolia; *e* is a dative case ending. (C and S are interchangeable in Mongol.)

8)
Möseldükün (Section 199)

Up to now, no one has been able to explain why *möse,* 'pipe stem', meant 'separating' when it became the verb *möseldükün.* This transformation has to do with the fact that the components of a Mongol pipe were detachable. The mouth piece was the 'leader', the stem refers to 'distance', and the bowl was 'a subordinate'.

9)
Tenggisge (Section 124)

Some scholars have changed *tenggisge* (for which is no interlinear Chinese translation) to *tenggeliq,* 'axle', so that the sentence reads 'I shall not let the cart with the axle fall'. But all carts have axles, so this explanation fails to

make sense. Since *dengselgen* in Section 174 means 'shaking', and since D and T are interchangeable in Mongol, this sentence can be better rendered as 'I shall not let this cart shake'.

10)
Alasa (Sections 265 and 273)

Alasa (or Alasai) was a name of a mountain range, also called Qulan, 'wild ass'. Alasas (in Section 273) is the plural form of Alasa. (Some scholars maintain that *alasai* was an Orkhon Turkish word for a horse.) In my opinion, the word Alasa is an error for the Mongol word *alaq,* 'spotted' or 'motley'. In the Mongol script, it is hard to distinguish Q from S at the end of words. There are many examples of the miscopying of Q for S (and vice versa) in the History and in the Golden History. For example: In Section 78, *baruq* should be *barus,* 'short-haired dog' (in the Orkhon Turkish dialect); in Section 114, *jarqaq* should be *jarqas,* 'leather coat';[64] in Section 139, *jürgimes* should be *jürgimeq* 'fearless' or 'peerless'.[65] Alasa can therefore probably best be read as *alaq,* 'spotted' or 'motley'.

Finally, the interlinear Chinese *huai* ma, 'a small horse', in Section 273, is an error for *zhui ma,* 'piebald horse'.

Three Mongol words in the History require an explanation. *Qatun* is an honorific term for someone's wife, and can be rendered as 'queen' in certain contexts. *Kö'üt,* 'sons', can be translated as 'prince'. (Cf. present-day *taij*.) *Ökin,* 'daughter' or 'girl', can be rendered as 'princess'. (Cf. present-day *abqai*.) *Qatun qalqatan* can be rendered as 'protector queen', i.e., a queen who acts as advocate for

64 See the Golden History, Choiji 1984, p. 143, n. 3.

65 See the Golden History, p. 188, n. 8.

66 See Section 64.

67 See Section 74.

68 See Section 64.

innocent persons in the presence of the Qahan. *Qalqatan* meant a person who acted as a shield.[66] *Kö'üt qad,* 'sons (of) qahans', referred to those sons who would become qahans. [67] *Ökin öchilten,* 'plea lady', was a woman who acted as an advocate for innocent persons in the presence of the Qahan. An *öchilten* was someone specially qualified to memorialize to the Qahan.[68] The sons of Qahans succeeded their father as Qahans, whereas the women became 'protector queens' and 'plea ladies'.

In this translation, I have added an s to the t and d that form the plural endings of tribal names. For example, Tayichi'ud becomes Tayichi'uds, meaning the Tayichiud people. Some scholars do not follow this practice, and use Tayichi'ud for both singular and plural. (See, for example, Cleaves 1982, p. 25.)

Born Free and Equal

The Mongols were born free and equal, an idea derived from their Shamanist religion, which was their mighty Heaven, and, in turn, their consciousness, and thus ordained their actions. Shamanism had no canon or doctrine.

In the History, we learn in three different places about freedom and equality.

According to Section 1, 'Chinggis Qahan was born with his destiny ordained by Heaven above'.

According to Section 197, when Chinggis Qahan suspected that one of his great generals had had sex with a girl before she was presented to the Qahan, he confronted the general and interrogated him in the presence of the girl and her father about what had happened. In the end, the girl, in desperation, said to Chinggis: The Qahan may, if he favours me, ask [i.e., examine] [my] body, born by the destiny of Heaven to [my] father and mother.'

According to Section 281, Ögödei (the second great Qahan) said: 'Being covetous, and fearing that the wild beasts, born with their destiny determined by Heaven and

Earth, would advance onto [the lands of my] elder and younger brother,…'

Here and elsewhere in the History, it is clearly explained that Chinggis, the girl, and the beasts were ruled by Heaven. The very first sentence of the History reads: 'Chinggis Qahan was born with his destiny ordained by Heaven above', implying that Chinggis was the son of god and so had the right to rule. But in Shamanistic thought, every living being, including the girl in Section 197 and the wild beasts in Section 281, was born with its destiny ordained by heaven.

Before I finish this introduction, it is my pleasure to thank Professor Gregor Benton, formerly of the Department of East Asian Studies at the University of Leeds for polishing my translation and for suggesting various other ways in which this book might be improved. I am most grateful to the artist Mr Ts. Mőngkhjin, a member of the Union of Mongolian Artists, for allowing me to reproduce his paintings in the History.

In 1962, on the 800th anniversary of his birth, the Mongols erected a monument to Chinggis Qahan on the banks of the Three Lakes at Deliün Boldaq in the Dadal Sum of the Mongolian People's Republic. I went to Deliün Boldaq on August 20, 1966, and wrote this three-line poem:

The beauty of the sky is the Three Stars (of Orion),
the decoration of the earth is the Three Lakes,
the ornament of mankind is Chinggis Qahan.





CHAPTER ONE

[1] Chinggis[69] Qahan was born with his destiny ordained by Heaven above.[70] He was descended from Börte Chino, whose name means 'greyish white wolf',[71] and Qo'ai-maral, the wolf's spouse, whose name means beautiful doe, who crossed the lake[72] and settled at the source of the Onon

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69 *Chinggis* probably meant 'strong'. See the Introduction, p. 30.

70 This phrase is not exclusively used of Chinggis Qahan and could apply to any person and even to animals (see Sections 197 and 281). It is based on the Shamanist notion that every individual carries a heavenly spirit in his or her head.

71 Following the Chinese interlinear notes in the earliest surviving text of the History, most previous translators have rendered *börte* as 'bluish' (Cleaves 1982, p. 1), 'blue-grey' (De Rachewiltz 1971–1984, vol. 4, p. 118), etc. In fact, *börte* means 'greyish white'. Börte Chino was probably born in 758 (see Hua-sai and Dugarjab 1984, p. 271).

72 The original interlinear note indicates that a specific lake, Tenggis, is meant—a convention adhered to by previous translators (De Rachewiltz 1971–1984, vol. 4, p. 118; Cleaves 1982, p. 1), although some note the more general meaning of 'sea' or 'large lake'. In Orkhon Turkish and in the Uighur dialect, Tenggis has precisely this meaning, so I have rendered it 'lake'. According to Wang Tingdong 1981, the ancestors of the Chinggis Qahan moved to this huge area about one thousand years ago. The lake referred to was probably Khölön Na'ur in Khölön Buyur (Buyir). Other scholars believe that it was Lake Baikal (see, for example, Hua-sai and Dugarjab 1984, p. 1, no. 2).

River at Burqan-qaldun,[73] where Batachi-qan[74] was born to them.

[2] The son of Batachi-qan was Tamacha. The son of Tamacha was Qorichar-mergen. The son of Qorichar-mergen was A'ujam-boro'ul. The son of A'ujam-boro'ul was Sali-qacha'u. The son of Sali-qacha'u was Yeke-nidün. The son of Yeke-nidün was Sem-sochi. The son of Sem-sochi was Qarchu.[75]

[3] The son of Qarchu, Borjiigidai-mergen, had Mongqoljinqo'a as his wife. The son of Borjigidai-mergen, Toroqoljin-bayan, had a wife called Boroqchin-qo'a, a young manservant called Boroldai-suyalbi, and two fine

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73 Burqan-qaldun is a place name. *Burqan* was the plural form of *burqai, 'great* great grandfather'. (For burqai, see Section 180.) A more common word for great great grandfather is *quluncha.* After around 1260, when Buddhism started to penetrate Mongolia, the Mongols called Buddha *'burqan'.* In Dawr dialect, *burqan* (*prono*unced barken) is a Shamanistic term meaning 'the spirit of a Shamanist'. Qaldun (Qaldut in Section 164), an archaic form of the modern *qadun,* means 'rocky mountain' or 'cliff'. De Rachewiltz (1971–1984, vol. 4, p. 151) thinks that the mountain in question may be either Tsagaan Öndör (White Heights) or Khentei Qan, both in the Khentei Mountains of northern Mongolia.

74 Batachi-qan was probably born in 786, for which see Hua-sai and Dugarjab 1984, p. 271.

75 Some of the proper names in this paragraph have secondary meanings. For example, Qorichar was a proper name, but *mergen* means 'good or wise hunter'. Qorichar-mergen is therefore 'Qorichar the good hunter'. *A'ujam* in A'ujam-boro'ul means 'wide'; Yeke-nidün means 'big eye'.

76 In the History, *külü'üt* means 'fine horses' or 'great heroes'. In Dawr dialect, however, *hülüg* (Külük) means a team of four oxen pulling a plough. It is common for people with four sons to say, 'I have one *hülüg'* According to the History, Chinggis Qahan had four *külü'üd* (four great marshals, see Section 163) and four dogs, i.e., great generals (Section 195). It is possible that this meaning of 'four (items) in a team' was developing at around this time (see also Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 219).

geldings,[76] Dayir[77] and Boro.[78] Toroqoljin had two sons, Duwa-soqor and Dobun-mergen.[79]

[4] Duwa-soqor had a single eye in the middle of his forehead. Through it, he could see for a distance of three journeys.[80]

[5] One day, Duwa-soqor climbed Burqan-qaldun with his younger brother, Dobun-mergen. Looking down from Burqan-qaldun, Duwa-soqor spied a group of people coming downstream along the Tünggelik.[81]

[6] He said: 'Among those people moving camp towards us is a beautiful girl in the front seat of a black-covered wooden cart. If she has not already been given to anyone, let us request her for you, young brother Dobun-mergen.' He sent his younger brother Dobun-mergen to take a look.

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77 'Big,' 'old.'

78 'Grey.'

79 More proper names: (1) Borjigin (as in Borjigidai) was the name of Chinggis Qahan's clan (see Section 42; Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 153). The suffix *-dai* indicates a male of the clan. (2) Mongqoljin-qo'a mean 'the beauty of the Mongols'. The suffix *-jin* indicates a female of the clan (but not if attached to a proper name, e.g., Temüjin, as in Section 59. See also Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 257). *Go'a* means 'beauty' or 'beautiful'. (3) *Bayan* means 'rich', as in Toroqoljin-bayan, Toroqoljin the rich'. (4) *Boro (as i*n Boroqchin-qo'a) means grey; the suffix -qchin is another female marker, today applied only to animals (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 153). (5) *Boroldai* (as in Boroldai-suyalbi) means 'grey bird' in Orkhon Turkish (cf. Mongol *boroldai-boljouwr,* 'sky pipit'). See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 153. The meaning of *suyalbi* is unclear. (6) *Duwa* (as in Duwa-soqor) means 'to express good wishes' in Uighur. *Soqor* means 'blind' or 'one-eyed'. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 284.

80 One journey *(ne'üri)* was the equivalent of about ten miles, the 'journey' being that of the nomadic camp (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 135).

81 *Tünggelik* or *tönggelik* is an adjectival form; it appears as *tüngge,* in noun form, in Section 177. In the Oyirad dialect, it takes the form of *deresü[n],* 'mat-thorn grass', i.e., achna therum splendens or lasiagrostis splendens. For details, see Eldengtei et al. 1991, pp. 441–444.

[7] Having reached the group, Dobun-mergen found a girl of true beauty and good reputation. Her name, Alan Qo'a,[82] was well known; she had not yet been given to any man.

[8] Barqujin-qo'a, the daughter of Barqudai-mergen, Lord of the Köl Barqujin lowland,[83] who had been given to Qorilartai-mergen, the Lord of the Qori-Tümeds,[84] was a member of the group. In the land of the Qori-Tümeds, at Ariq-usun,[85] Barqujin-qo'a, wife of Qorilartai-mergen, had given birth to the girl Alan Qo'a.

[9] Qorilartai-mergen had fallen out with his people when they banned each other from hunting sable, squirrel, and other wild animals in the Qori-Tümed lands. Because of this ban, they formed the Qorilar[86] clan. He deemed Burqan-qaldun, rich in wild animals and gazelles, a good place. Shinchi-bayan[87] established [shamanistic] deities as the spirit-lords[88] of Burqan-galdun[89] while he was travelling in the direction of Uri[y]angqai. Alan Qo'a,

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82 'Outstanding beauty' in Orkhon Turkish.

83 Köl in the Orkhon Turkish dialect meant 'lake' or 'branch of a river'; Barqujun is the name of a large river flowing into Lake Baikal from the northeast. The word translated here as 'lowland' *(töqm)* means a hollow, valley, or basin. For further information on the area, see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 217. De Rachewiltz identifies the area as a lowland region between the Selenga and Barguzin Rivers (De Rachewiltz 1971–1984, vol. 4, p. 153).

84 Tumad, Tümed.

85 'Clean river.'

86 Orilar (Qorinar, Qorilar, Qorlos) is a clan name; *-lar* (or *-nar*) is a plural ending.

87 Shinchi: cf. *shinjigechi,* 'fortune-teller'. See Eldengtei et al. 1991, pp. 525–526.

88 Most previous translators have taken these two words *(burqan bosqaqsan)* to be a proper name, following the Chinese interlinearnote. In fact, *bosqaqsan* is the past tense of a verb meaning 'to establish'. Among Buriyad Shamanists, the *gazaryn ejed* (lords of the land) are the spirit-owners of places. They usually originate in clan ancestors and can be contacted by Shamans.

daughter of the Qori Tümed Qorilartal-mergen born at Ariq-usun, was there requested [by Duwa-soqor] in marriage. This is how she came to be the wife of Dobun-mergen.

[10] Having joined Dobun-mergen, Alan Qo'a bore him two sons, Bügünütei and Belgünütei.

[11] Duwa-soqor, the older brother, had four sons. Duwasoqor died soon afterwards. After Duwa-soqor's death, his four sons no longer looked upon their uncle Dobun-mergen as kin, but despised him and moved away. They split into four clans that became the Four Peoples.[90]

[12] One day, Dobun-mergen set out to go hunting on Toqochaq Peak. In a forest, he met an Uri[y]angqad[ai] man who had killed a three-year-old deer and was roasting its ribs and rectum.

[13] Dobun-mergen said: 'Friend,[91] give me some of the meat, as my share.'[92] 'I will,' said the hunter. Keeping the lungs, head, and skin,[93] he gave [the rest of] the meat of the three-year-old deer to Dobun-mergen.

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89 The Sacred Mountain.

90 Dörben irgen.

91 *Nökör,* translated here as 'friend', indicates one of the two most important relationships in the History, the other being *anda* (see Section 96). As a noun, *nökör* can mean 'friend' or 'faithful follower', but it can also mean 'enemy' (see Section 153, 267). It derives from a verb, *nökhökhü (nöqüqü)* meaning 'to match' or 'to patch things up'. For further information on *nökör,* see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 140. The best translation of *nökör* is 'match' or 'contender'.

92 A man may demand a share of the meat before the hunter loads it onto his horse.

93 The head, innards, and skin of an animal were consecrated to the spirits. A hunter would not give these away to other people for fear that misfortune might befall him. The word *jildü,* here translated as 'lungs', actually extends to all the organs of the thorax—diaphragm, heart, and lungs. It also has another form, *jüldü,* used in Section 214 to mean 'best achievement' or 'outstanding merits'. (For *jildü,* see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 300; for *jüldü,* see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 304).

[14] Dobun-mergen loaded up the three-year-old deer. While continuing on his way, he met a poor man leading his young son.

[15] Dobun-mergen asked: 'Who are you?' The man replied: 'I am a man called Ma'aliq of the Baya'uds and in distress. I will give you this son of mine in exchange for part of that beast's flesh.'

[16] On hearing those words, Dobun-mergen tore off one of the deer's hind-legs and gave it to the man. He then took the boy back to his yurt, where the boy worked as a servant.

[17] Not long afterwards, Dobun-mergen died. After his death, despite the loss of her husband, Alan Qo'a bore three more sons called Buqu-qadagi, Buqatu-salji, and Bodonchar-mungqaq.[94]

[18] Belgünütei and Bügünütei, the two sons born earlier to Dobun-mergen, talked together about their mother Alan Qo'a behind her back: This mother of ours has produced three sons, without [our father's] older brother, younger brother, or cousins[95] or any husband. Only the Ma'aliq Baya'ud man lives in this yurt. They are probably his three sons.' Alan Qo'a sensed what they were saying behind her back.

[19] One spring day, after boiling some dried mutton, she made her five sons, Belgünütei, Bügünütei, Buqu-qatagi, Buqatu-salji, and Bodonchar-mungqaq, sit down in a row. She gave each an arrow-shaft, saying: 'Break it.' They broke the arrow-shafts easily and threw them aside. Again, she took five arrow-shafts[96] and bound them together. She gave the five bound shafts to each in turn, saying: 'Break them.' Each tried, but none succeeded.

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94 Badonchar (or Bodonchar), 'the Fool' was probably born in 970; see Hua-sai and Dugarjab 1984, p. 271.

95 Literally, 'third cousins (on the father's side)'. The brothers refer here to the practice of levirate, whereby a widow is passed on to her husband's younger brother or some other male relative so that her offspring remains within the descent group.

[20] At this, Alan Qo'a said to her two sons Belgünütei and Bügünütei: 'You have doubted me. You have talked together, saying: "Whose are these three sons that she has borne? Whence did they come?" It is right for you to be suspicious.

[21] Every night, a shining yellow man came into the yurt through the light of the smoke-hole and over the top of the door. He caressed my belly and his light sank into it. He [slunk] sheepishly away like a yellow dog by the light of the sun and moon.'

Why do you talk unwisely?
Evidently it is a sign
that they are sons of Heaven.
Why do you compare them
to the black-haired commoners?[97]
When they become lords of all,
the common people must understand.

[22] Again, Alan Qo'a spoke with her five sons: 'All five of you were all born of this same belly. Alone, you can be broken easily by anyone. Together and of one mind, like bound arrow-shafts, none can easily vanquish you.' Not long afterwards, their mother Alan Qo'a passed away.

[23] After Alan Qo'a's death, the five elder and younger brothers divided the livestock and property among themselves. Four of them—Belgününtei, Bügünütei, Buqu-qatagi, and Buqatu-salji—each took a share. Only Bodonchar Mungqaq got no share, for they thought him stupid and dull[98] and therefore did not count him as their kin.

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96 Alan Qo'a's demonstration holds additional force in Mongol, since the word for an arrow-shaft *(müsü)* also means 'a straight line' and has moral overtones, like the English 'straight'. *Müsütei khün,* for example, means 'a man of integrity'. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 231. An arrow is also a sign of unity and authority.

97 Commoners wore no hats to cover their black hair.

[24] No longer counted as a member of the family, Bodonchar thought to himself: 'Why have I lived here until now?' He rode away on an off-white, fleet-footed[99] horse with a mangy tail and sores along its black-striped back. 'If I am to die,' he said, 'let me die. If I am to live, let me live.'[100] And he gallopped off down the Onon River. On the island of Baljun, he built a grass yurt and lived there.

[25] While living in this way, he saw a young female hawk catch and eat a black pheasant. Using the tail hairs of his offwhite, mangy-tailed, sore-ridden horse with the black-striped back as a snare, he captured the hawk and reared it.

[26] When he was without food, he would lie in wait and kill wild beasts that wolves had cornered at the foot of the cliffs and shoot and kill them. Together with the hawk, he would pick up and eat what the wolves had left behind. So as the year passed, he nourished both his own gullet and the hawk's.

[27] Spring arrived, bringing the ducks with it. He starved his hawk and flew it at them. He hung up the ducks and geese that the hawk caught until

bad odours rose
from every withered tree,
dank smells
from every dried-up tree.[101]

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98 *Mungqaq* means 'stupid and dull'. See also p. 42 n. 94.

99 *Oroq* means 'off-white'; *shingqula (shinggul)* means 'a dive or swift penetration'. I translate these two words as 'an off-white, fleet-footed horse'. Section 55 has *qurdun qubi,* meaning 'swift dun horse'. In both cases, *shingqula* and *qurdun qubi* are probably the names of the horses. For details, see Choiji 1984, p. 33, n. 3.

100 Literally, 'if die, its let die; if live, its let live', i.e., 'if (I) die, it (is fate)'s (wish to) let (me) die'. Other translators (e.g., De Rachewiltz, vol. 4, p. 122) think the passage should read: 'If he (the horse) dies, I shall die…'.

[28] From behind the northern side[102] of Mount Düyiren, a group of travellers were moving camp along the Tünggelik Stream. After flying his hawk, Bodonchar Mungqaq was wont to visit them, drinking kumisss[103] with them in the day and returning to his grass yurt at night to sleep.

[29] These people asked for Bodonchar's hawk, but he refused to give it to them. They failed to ask Bodonchar whose son he was and what tribe he belonged to. He, too, did not ask them what people they were. Yet he kept coming and going.

[30] His elder brother Buqu-qatagi, thinking that his younger brother Bodonchar had gone downstream along the Onon River, came searching for him. He asked these people moving down the Tünggelik Stream whether they had seen such a man with such a horse.

[31] They answered: 'A man and a horse similar to those that you describe are here, together with a hawk. Every day he comes to us, drinks kumisss, and goes away. It is not known where he spends the night. When the wind rises in the northwest, the feathers and down of the ducks and geese that his hawk catches scatter like snow and blow across here. He cannot be far away. At around this time, he comes. Wait here for him.'

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101 The words translated here as 'bad odours' and 'dank smells' *(qonqshi'ut and höngshi'üt)* literally mean 'the bad smells of burning fat and wild onions'. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 177, 198.

102 Direction was naturally important to the Mongols. The word translated here as 'rear' *(gerü)* also means 'northern side', i.e., the cold, sunless side, and the forests that grow on the northern side of a mountain. Similarly, *öbör* means the 'front side' or the 'southern side'. For *gerü,* see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 203.

103 Literally, 'eating a sour thing'. Kumiss (fermented mare's milk) and the associated verb *esükchilejü* (used here) derive from *esük (ösög)* meaning 'sour'. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 104.

[32] After some time, a man rode slowly up the Tünggelik. It turned out to be Bodonchar. Buqu-qatagi recognised him immediately. With Buqu-qatagi in the lead, the two trotted off together up the Onon River.

[33] Bodonchar, trotting along behind his older brother, said to him: 'My brother, my brother, a body needs a head, a garment needs a collar.'[104] His words had no effect on Buqu-qatagi.

[34] He repeated the same words. Again, they had no effect; his elder brother remained silent. After travelling further still, Bodonchar said the same words yet again. 'What were you saying?' his older brother asked.

[35] Bodonchar replied: 'Those people camped along the Tünggelik do not distinguish between the great [lord] and the small [folk], between good and bad, between head and hooves.[105] Everyone is equal. They are a simple people, Let us plunder them.'

[36] His older brother said: 'If what you say is true, we will consult with our brothers when we arrive at the yurt and form a plan to plunder those people.'

[37] After reaching the yurt, the brothers talked the matter over and set out on horseback. Bodonchar himself was sent galloping ahead, as scout.

[38] On the way, Bodonchar captured a woman, four to five months pregnant.[106] He asked her who she was. She replied: 'I am a Greater[107] Uriyangqai woman of the Jarchi'ut tribe.'

[39] The five brothers attacked the camp and seized livestock, property, and people to serve them. They then settled down.

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104 'Collar' *(jaqa)* was used as a metaphor for a leader. (Possibly something larger, e.g., a cape, is meant here.) See Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 289–90. The gist of Bodonchar's utterance, explained more fully in Section 35, is that without a leader, any group of people would remain incapable of organising its own defence. There is also the implication that some form of hierarchy is needed, under Bodonchar and his brothers.

105 Lord and commoners are meant by 'head and hooves'.

[40] The woman with child went with Bodonchar and bore a son who, as the son of a foreigner, was called Jajiradai. He became the founder of the Jadarans. Jadaraday's[108] son was called Tügü'üdei and Tügü'üdei's son was called Büri-bulchiru. Büri-bulchiru's son was called Qara-qada'an and Qara-qada'an's son was called Jamuqa. Thus the Jadaran clan came into being.

[41] The same woman bore a son by Bodonchar. As she was a captured woman, they named the son Ba'aridai. He became founder of the Ba'arin clan.[109] Ba'aridai's son was called Chiduqul-bökö. Chiduqul-bökö's wives were many, and his sons abounded. Thus the Menen-Ba'arin clan came into being.

[42] From Belgünütei came the Belgünüt clan. From Bügünütei came the Bügünüt clan. From Buqu-qatagi came the Qatagin clan. From Buqutu-salji came the Salji'ut clan. From Bodonchar came the Borjigins.

[43] To Bodonchar's principal wife[110] was born a son named Barim-shi'iraju-qabichi. Bodonchar also took a concubine as part of the dowry of Qabichi-ba'atur's mother.[111] A son named Jewüredei was born to this concubine. At first, Jewüredei took part in the Jügeli ceremony.[112]

[44] After Bodonchar's death, a man of the Adangqa[113] Uriyangqad[ai] was constantly present in Jewüredei's yurt. Qabichi[114] and others thought that this man might have fathered Jewüredei, expelled [Jewüredei] from the Jügeli

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106 Literally, 'half-pregnant' *(dumda ke'elitei),* i.e., four to five months pregnant.

107 *Adangqan* should here be read as *nengdegsen,* i.e., 'greater'. Some say that the Adangqans were a sub-tribe of the Uriyangqais. In Chinggis Qahan's day, the Mongols called their nation *Nengdegsen yeke ulus,* the Greater Great Nation. For details, see Choiji 1984, pp. 40–41, n. 3.

108 Jajiradai.

109 According to Professor Bürinbatu, writing in the Academic Journal of the University of Inner Mongolia, no. 4 (1991), p. 32, the word *baa'ar* (or *ba'ari*) meant 'mixture'.

ceremony, and made him set up the Jewüreyit clan.[115] He was the founder of the Jewüreds.[116]

[45] Qabichi-ba'atur's son was called Menen-tudun. Menentudun had seven sons—Qachi-külük, Qachin,

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110 Other translators (e.g., De Rachewiltz) translate *ablin eme* as 'the wife (that Bodonchar) chose himself'. Actually, it means first wife or principal wife, the wife chosen for a boy in his childhood. Only the children of this wife were able to inherit their father's position and property. (See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 87).

111 There were three forms of dowry at the time: (i) *Inje,* the word used here, included housemaids, livestock, and valuables such as gold and silver. The bride had absolute rights over this dowry. (Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 109.) (ii) *Shitkül,* which appears in Section 96, describes items given by the bride's parents to the groom's parents. The bride had no rights over these items. (Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 252–253.) (iii) *Emüsgel,* which also appears in Section 96, consists of items of clothing given by the bride to the groom's parents when she meets them for the first time. (Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 100.)

112 This ceremony consisted of hanging the complete skin, the head, and the hooves of an animal (ox, horse or sheep) on a pole as an offering to the ancestors. Jewüredei was the son of a concubine, so he could not inherit from his father. (See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 305.)

113 Greater. See Section 38.

114 See Section43.

115 This passage is rather confusing. Jewüredei should not have taken part in the *jügeli* ceremony; the implication is that Bodonchar may have wished to make him a full son, but this wish was rejected by Barimshi'iraju-qabachi after Bodonchar's death. The passage translated here as 'a man of the Adangqa Uriangqad[ai] was constantly present in the yurt' has been taken by other translators, on the basis of the word *je* ('perhaps') at the end of the statement, to indicate that the man in question was Jewüredei's father. However, there is nothing to support this assertion, especially since Jewüredei could be excluded from the clan on account of his mother's status. The passage may simply mean that Jewüredei was in the wrong for encouraging a man of a foreign tribe to frequent a yurt where Bodonchar's widow and other women were living alone.

Qachi'u, Qachula, Qachi'un, Qarandai,[117] and Nachin-ba'atur.[118]

[46] Qachi-külük's son Qaidu was born to Mother Nomolun. Qachin's son was called Noyagidai, for he was, by temperament, lordly. From him stemmed the Noyakin clan. The son of Qachi'u was called Barulatai, because he had a big body and ate crudely. From him the Barulas clan was descended. Qachula's sons also ate crudely and was therefore called Yeke-Barula[119] and Üchügen-Barula.[120] They, too, formed Barulas clans—the Erdemtü-Barula, the Tödö'en-Barula, [121] and other Barulas. Qarandai's sons had no leader to stir the millet porridge, [122] and therefore formed the Buda'at clan. Qachi'un's son, named Adarkidai, was stubborn towards his elder and younger brothers and therefore formed the Adargin clan. The sons of Nachin-ba'atur, called Uru'udai and Mangqutai, founded the Uru'ut and Mangqut clans. Nachin-ba'atur's sons born to his principal wife were called Shiju'udai and Doqoladai. (Shiju'ud and Doqolad later formed clans.)[123]

[47] Qaidu's three sons were Bai-shingqor-doqshin, Charaqailingqu, and Cha'ujin-örtegei. Bai-shingqor-doqshin's son was Tumbinai-sechin. Charaqai-lingqu's son was Senggüm-bilge. Senggüm-bilge's son was Ambaqai. They founded the Tayichi'ut[124] clan. Charaqai-lingqu's sister-in-law became his wife and bore a son named

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116 Jewuredei.

117 Qaraldai.

118 Menen-tudun means 'great chief', although it is here used as a proper name. It derives from the Mongolian *mene,* 'large' or 'many', and the Orkhon Turkish *tudun,* the title of a tribal commander. (See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 224.) Qachi'un is also used here as a proper name, but it derives from an Orkhon Turkish word, *qatigun,* 'strong', 'solid', 'hard' (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 176).

119 'Big'Barula.

120 'Small' Barula.

121 Tiny' Barula.

122 I.e., they had physical strength but little intelligence.

Besütei, from whom the Besüt clan was descended. From Cha'ujin-örtegei's sons came the Oronar, Qongqotan, Arula [t], Sönit, Qabturqas, and Geniges clans.[125]

[48] Tumbinai-sechin's two sons were Qabul Qahan[126] and Sem-sechüle. Sem-sechüle's son was Bültechü-ba'atur. Qabul Qahan had seven sons. Ökin-barqaq was his eldest son. The rest were Bartan-ba'atur, Qutu[q]tu-mönggür, Qutula Qahan, Qulan, Qada'an, and Tödö'en-otchigin.

[49] Ökin-barqaq's son was Qutuqtu-yürki.[127] Qutuqtu-yürki's two sons were Seche-beki and Taichu. From them was descended the Yürki clan.

[50] Bartan-ba'atur had four sons—Menggetü-kiyan, Nekün-taishi, Yisügei-ba'atur, and Daritai-otchigin.

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123 *Noyamsiq* means 'lordly'; *baruq* means 'voracious', 'crude', 'uncivilised' (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 145); *buda'an* means 'porridge' (made of millet) (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 158). These words are thought by many Mongols to explain the clan names contained in this section. However, most scholars dismiss these explanations as exercises in folk etymology. The sentence within brackets is restored from Irinchin 1987, p. 28, n. 2.

124 The Tayichi'uds.

125 *Shingqor* (as in Bai-shingqor-doqshin) is a kind of falcon with white claws and a red beak. (In Orkhon Turkish, it means 'bird of prey'). *Doqshin* means 'furious', 'violent', 'wild'. Hence Bai-shingqor-doqshin means 'untamed falcon' (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 142). *Lingqu* (as in Charaqai-lingqu) was a Liao Dynasty (916–1119) title *(lingwen)* given to the chief of a small tribe (see Choiji 1984, p. 22). *Senggüm* was another Liao Dynasty title *(xiangwen)* given to the commander of a frontier army, while *bilge* was an honorary title from the Orkhon Turkish word for 'wise'. Hence Senggüm-bilge means 'the wise commander' (see Choiji 1984, p. 52, n. 5; Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 237). *Beki* (as in Seche beki) in Section 49 is another Orkhon Turkish title (used for both males and females) for a highranking official (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 237–238).

126 There are three rivers in Xölön Buyir (or Buir)—the Qabul, Talbur, and Ken (or Kan). Qabul was the founding father of the Mongol tribe. Qabul represented the twentieth generation (and Chinggi the twenty-third).

Qutuqtu-mönggür's son was Büri-bökö. At the feast in the forest of the Onon, it was he was who slashed Belgütei's shoulder.[128]

[51] Qutula Qahan's three sons were Jochi, Girma'u, and Altan. Qulan-ba'atur's son was Yeke-cheren, lord of the two freedmen Badai and Kishilig.[129] Neither Qada'an nor Tödö'en had children.

[52] Qabul Qahan ruled over all the Mongqols. Although Qabul Qahan had seven sons of his own, Senggüm-bilge's son Ambaqai Qahan[130] ruled over all the Mongqols after Qabul Qahan, because Qabul Qahan so wished it.

[53] Ambaqai Qahan gave his daughter to the Ayiri'utBuiru'ut Tatar people, on the Urshi'un River[131] between Lake Buyur and Lake Kölen. While conducting her

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127 Sorqatu-yürki. See Section 122.

128 Although Nekün (in Nekün-taishi) is here used as a proper name, in Section 200 it means a house-maid or servant (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 136). There are two explanations for Taishi: that it derives (a) from the Chinese *taizi,* 'prince', or 'crown prince' (see Jagchid-Sechin 1979, p. 44, n. 3) and (b) from the Chinese *taishi,* 'great master', an honorific title used by northern nomadic peoples after the Liao Dynasty (see Dorontib 1979, p. 22, n. 22). The latter explanation is more convincing, given that the crown-prince system was not established in Mongolia until after the enthronement of Chinggis Qahan. *Taishi* eventually became *taiji,* a general term in Mongol for male nobles. Yisügei derives from *yisü(n),* 'nine'. Nine was considered to be an auspicious and lucky number by Mongolians; there are references in the History to 'nine horses' (Section 267), 'nine nights' (Section 80), and so on (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 308). *Ba'atur* means 'hero'. *Otchigin* (as in Daritai-otchigin) is a compound of the Orkhon Turkish word *ot,* 'fire', and *chigin,* a high-ranking official; it therefore means 'guardian of the hearth'. The Mongol *otgon (otqon)* derives from *otchigin* and refers to the youngest son of a family who inherits his father's possessions but not his title, and who could not represent the family at ceremonies at the ancestor's graves (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 117). *Büri* (as in Büri-bökö) means 'wolf' in the Orkhon Turkish dialect, while *bökö* means a wrestler or strong man. The incident here referred to is described in Section 139 (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 160).

[to them], he was captured by the Jüyin[132]. Tatarpepople and taken to the Altan-qahan of the Kitads. Using a Besütei man, Balaqachi, as messenger, Ambaqai Qahan sent word to Qutula, the middle of Qabul Qahan's seven sons, and to Qada'an-taishi, one of his own ten sons,[133] to say: 'I became the Qahan of all, the Lord of the Nation.[134] While escorting my own daughter, I have been captured by the Tatar people. Do not follow my example. Strive until the nails of your five fingers splinter and your ten fingers drop from your hands to avenge[135] me.' So saying, he dispatched the messenger.

[54] Yisügei-ba'atur was flying hawks on the Onon River when he met Yeke-chiledü of the Merkids, who was just starting out for home with an Olqunu'ut girl he had married. Craning his neck, he saw a woman[136] of unique colour and complexion. He galloped home to his yurt and returned leading his older brother Nekün-taishi and his younger brother Daritai-otchigin.

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129 Kishilig, here used as a proper name, means 'huge', 'broadminded', 'boastful' in Orkhon Turkish (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 215). *Darqan,* translated here as 'freedman', is an Orkhon Turkish term and a title given to a commoner who achieves outstanding military merit. The privileges that went with the title included exemption from official taxes and immunity from punishment for up to eight crimes (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 277–278). The deeds of Badai and Kishiliq are recounted in Sections 169 and 170.

130 Cleaves wrongly asserts that the Mongols ignored Ambaqai Qahan in their dynastic chart.

131 The River Urshi'un flows from Lake Buyur (Buir) to Lake Kölen (Khölön). Today, it is called the Urshun or Orshun (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 122). Kölen means 'large lake' in Orkhon Turkish (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 217–218).

132 The Jüyin was a frontier army of the Jin Dynasty (1115–1234); it consisted of Kitans and Tatars in the Khölön-Buir area (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 305).

133 The message was sent through an intermediary either because it would have been politically inexpedient for the messenger to cross Qutula's territory without explaining his purpose or simply because Qada'an-taishi was too far away.

[55] Their arrival frightened Chiledü, who beat his swift dun horse on the thigh and fled across a hill pursued by the three men. Chiledü crossed the spur of the hill to his cart. Lady[137] Hö'elün, who was waiting in the cart, said: 'Did you see the look on the faces of those men? They wish to kill you. As long as you remain alive, there will be girls on the front seats of carts and women in the black-covered wooden carts. If you live, you will perhaps find a girl or a woman for yourself. If she has another name, you can call her Hö'elün. Save yourself. While you live, smell my fragrance.'[138] With these words, she removed her shirt. He leaned across his horse to take it. As he did so, the three men rounded the spur of the hill towards him. He beat the thigh of his swift dun horse and fled upstream along the Onon River.

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134 Although *ulus-un ejen* is correctly translated here as 'lord of the nation', 'lord of the people' would perhaps be a more realistic description, given the lack of overall political cohesion. This is the first of several occurrences in the History of the word *ulus* ('nation').

135 *Hachi,* translated here as 'vengeance', has (like *nökör)* two apparently contradictory meanings. On the one hand, it means 'favour', 'kindness', 'grace'; on the other hand, it means 'foe', 'hatred', 'vengeance'. A more neutral translation might be 'debt' or 'a thing that is owed' (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 191).

136 Usually, the History distinguishes between unmarried girls *(öki)* and married women *(qatun* in respectful usage, the wife of a *qan).* Here, the two words are compounded as *öki qatu,* indicating either that Yisügei-ba'atur was uncertain about the woman's status (see Dorontib 1979, p. 26, n. 4) or that she was newly wed.

137 'Lady' is the usual translation for *üjin* (although Cleaves 1982 leaves it untranslated). The title is often said to derive from the Chinese *furen,* 'lady', pronounced *üjen (üjin)* in Mongol, which has no 'f'. (See Jagchid-Sechin 1979, p. 52, n. 1.) However, in the thirteenth century, the Mongols created a number of exclusive honorific titles. For example, Hö'elün, Börte (see Section 66), and Huja'ur Üjin (see Section 177) were referred to as *üjin,* meaning 'lady' or 'queen'. Temüjin, after whom Chinggis was named, bore the title *üge,* meaning 'senior' or 'sir' (for *üge,* see Section 59, p. 31. See Ü).

[56] The three men pursued him across seven[139] hills before returning. Yisügei-ba'atur took hold of the tether[140] of Lady Hö'elün['s cart]. His older brother Nekün-taishi led; his younger brother Daritai-otchigin walked beside the cartshaft.[141] As they proceeded, Lady Hö'elün said: 'My older brother[142] Chiledü is one

whose hair has never blown
in the wind,
whose belly has never hungered
in the wild land.

What will now become of him?' Her two plaits[143] were flung now across her back, now across her breast, as she threw herself backwards and forwards. 'What is happening to me?' she cried. The Onon River churned and the forest echoed to the sound of her loud crying. As he walked alongside her, Daritai-otchigin said:

'The one you embraced
has crossed many ridges.
The one you cry for
has crossed much water.

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138 'Smell' means 'kiss' in 'smell my fragrance'. Hö'elün means that she wants him to remember her.

139 Just as nine was a lucky number for the Mongols, seven was unlucky.

140 Strictly speaking, *delbege* is not so much a tether as a rope attached to the bridle of a cart-pulling animal, used to whip the animal on (see Dorontib 1980, p. 17, n. 13, and Eldengtei and Ardajab 1986, p. 99, n. 2).

141 *Kiligü [Kilügü]*, which used to mean a cart-shaft, now means a crosswise beam on a cart. See Eldengtei and Ardajab 1986, pp. 99–100; Eldengtei et al. 1991, p. 449; and Nei Menggu daxue Menggu yuwen yanjiushi 1976–1977, p. 166.

142 The text says 'older brother' *(aqa)*, but this is simply a respectful reference by Hö'elün to her husband.

However much you cry,
from such a distance, he will not see you.
However much you search for him,
you will not find his road.

Be still,' he told her. Then Yisügei brought Lady Hö'elün into his yurt. This is how Yisügei took Lady Hö'elün.

[57] As Ambaqai Qahan had named both Qada'an and Qutula, all the Mongqols and the Tayichi'uts gathered together in the Qorqonaq forest by the Onon and made Qutala their qahan. The Mongqols celebrated by dancing and feasting. Qutula was raised up as Qahan and they danced around the Many-Leaved Tree of Qorqonaq[144] until they stood in furrows up to their ribs and made wounds up to their knees.

[58] After becoming qahan, Qutula rode out with Qada'antaishi against the Tatars. Thirteen times they joined battle with the Tatars Kötön-baraqa and Jali-buqa but failed to avenge Ambaqai Qahan.

[59] Then Yisügei-ba'atur plundered Temüjin-üge,[145] Qoribuga, and other Tatars. On his return, Lady Hö'elün was pregnant. They were at Deli'ün-boldaq on the Onon when Chinggis Qahan was born. At the time of his birth, he held in his right hand a clot of blood as big as a knucklebone. Born at the time of the capture of the Tatar Temüjin-üge, they thought to name him Temüjin.[146]

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143 Most translators take this to be a reference to Childeü's plaits *(shibülger),* but actually it refers to Lady Hö'elün's plaits. At the time of the History, girls in Mongolia never cut their hair before marriage but plaited it instead into ten or more braids. On marrying, they combined these plaits into two large braids hanging behind their ears.

144 A *saqlaqar* is a willow-like tree with many leaves and hanging branches (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 233). Some translators (e.g., Cleaves and De Rachewiltz) assume that the passage refers to some particular tree, but it is not clear if the tree is special for some reason now forgotten or simply because of its association with Chinggis Qahan. (There are further references to the tree in Sections 117 and 206.)

[60] Yisügei-ba'atur had four sons by Lady Hö'elün: Temüjin, Qasar, Qachi'un, and Temüge. A girl was also born and named Temülün. When Temüjin was nine, Jochiqasar was seven, Qachi'un-elchi[147] was five, Temüge-otchigin was three, and Temülün was in the cradle.

[61] When Temüjin was nine, Yisügei-ba'atur decided to find a wife for him among the Olqunu'ut relatives of his mother Hö'elün, his mother's brothers. They set out together. While travelling, they met Dei-sechen[148] of the Onggirats[149] between Chekcher and Chiqurgu.

[62] Dei-sechen said: 'Yisügei-quda,[150] who will you see?' Yisügei-ba'atur replied: 'I am going to the Olqunu'ut people with my son to ask his mother's brothers for a wife.' Deisechen said: 'This boy of yours has fire in his eyes and light in his face.[151]

[63] Yisügei-quda, last night I had a dream. A white gerfalcon, holding both the sun and the moon, flew down and perched on my hand. I have not talked to the people about my dream. When we gazed in the past at the sun and moon, they were merely seen. Now this gerfalcon lights with them on my hand. The white one descends onto my

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145 The suffix *-üge,* as in Temüjin-üge, today exists only in the Dawr dialect of Mongol. Specifically, it means 'mother's older brother'. More generally, however, it is used of anyone who seems older than one's parents or is more than fifty years old, in the sense of 'elder' or 'senior'. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 130. Temüjin was born on the sixteenth day of the first month of the summer (the fourth lunar month), on the red circle day. For details, see Murakami 1970–1976, vol. 1, pp. 80–81. For the red circle day, see p. 70, n. 177 and p. 169, n. 435.

146 Chinggis Qahan's name derives from the Orkhon Turkish word *temür,* 'iron', with the suffix -jin, indicating agency; it therefore means 'blacksmith'. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 257–258.

147 Qachi'un is a proper name; the suffix *-elchi* was an official title in the Orkhon Turkish dialect meaning an ambassador of high rank or a prophet. It appears in this sense in Section 53 of the History (where it is translated as 'messenger'). See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 102.

hand. What good thing did this portend? Yisügei-quda, my dream foreshadowed your arrival, together with your son. I dreamt a good dream that portended your arrival among the Kiyat people.

[64] Since days of old, we Onggirat people with

the colour of our sisters' children,
the complexion of our daughters,

have never disputed with other nations over land and people.

We make our fair-faced daughters
sit in the two-wheeled cart,
harnessed to a black camel,
for you who become qahans,
and send them off at a trot.
On the qatan throne
we make them sit together with you.

We have never disputed with other nations over land and people.

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148 While the suffix *-üge* (p. 56, n. 145) meant 'mother's older brother', the prefix *dei-,* derived from an Orkhon Turkish word, meant 'mother's younger brother'. *Dei-* was, by extension, used of elders more generally (in the sense of 'sir' or 'senior'). *Sechen,* meaning 'wise, enlightened one', was also used as an official title. Dei-sechen therefore meant 'wise uncle'. At a later date, the name came to mean a queen's younger brother. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 280.

149 The Onggirats, a tribe frequently mentioned in the History, were located in the Khölön Buir area. They struck frequent marriage alliances with the Borjigins, Chinggis Qahan's tribe (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 114).

150 *Quda* was used to address affines. It derived from *qudaldaqu,* 'to sell', showing the contractual nature of such marriages. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 186.

151 I.e., he looks intelligent.

We have reared our fair-skinned daughters,
sat them on the cart's front seat,
harnessed to a dark-grey camel,
and sent them forth.
on the high throne,
we make them sit at your [majesty's] side.

From of old the Onggirat people have been

shielded[152] by the qatun,
pleaded for by daughters,
because of the colour of our sisters' children,
because of the fair complexion of our daughters.

[65] Our sons are assessed by their camping places, our daughters are regarded for their fair complexion.

Let us go to my yurt, Yisügei-quda. My daughter is young, regard her, quda.' Dei-sechen took him to his yurt and made him dismount.

[66] When Yisügei saw Dei-sechen's daughter, there was light in her face and fire in her eyes. After seeing the girl, he kept her in his thoughts. She was ten years of age, a year older than Temüjin; her name was Börte. Yisügei stayed overnight and asked for the girl the next day. Dei-sechen replied: 'If, after numerous requests, I give her, I will be respected. If after only a few requests, I will be held cheap. It is not the fate of a girl to grow old in the doorway behind which she was born. I will give you my daughter. Leave your son here as my son-in-law when you go.' They agreed

152 Although *qalqatan* is here translated as 'shielded', it is actually a modification of the noun *qalqa,* a shield about 45 inches long and 30 inches wide, made of leather or willow branches. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 169. Dei-sechen describes the political expediency of marriage alliances in which the daughters of weaker tribes act as 'shields' against the more powerful tribes into which they marry. Some scholars believe that *qalqatan* and *öchilten* ('a pleader') were high-ranking titles.

to the marriage, and Yisügei-ba'atur said: 'I leave my son as a son-in-law, but he is afraid of dogs. Quda, do not allow my boy to be frightened by dogs.'[153] After saying these words, he gave his spare horse as a gift and, leaving Temüjin behind as a son-in-law, departed.

[67] On the way, at Chekcher in the Shira-ke'er,[154] Yisügei-ba'atur came across some feasting Tatars. Being thirsty, he dismounted [to join] their feast. The Tatars recognised him. 'Yisügei-Kiyan has come,' they said, recalling how he had once caused them insult by robbing them. Secretly wishing to harm him, they mixed poison [into his food] and gave it to him. On the way, he felt sick. On arriving at his yurt after three days' travel, his condition became worse. [157]

[68] Yisügei-ba'atur said 'I feel sick inside. Who is at hand?'[155] 'I am nearby,' said Mönglik,[156] the son of the old Qongqotat man, Charaqa. Yisügei-ba'atur called Mönglik in. 'Mönglik, my child, I have small children. I left my own Temüjin as a son-in-law. On my way back, some Tatars secretly harmed me. I feel sick inside. I charge you to take care of my small sons, who are your younger brothers, and of your widowed sister-in-law. Bring back my son Temüjin quickly, Mönglik my child.' With that, he passed away.

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153 The reference to dogs seems curious; there is no hint elsewhere in the History of Temüjin fearing them. The reference is probably to Yisügei-ba'atur's enemies (in which case, it was a well-founded fear on Temüjin's part—see Section 67) and a warning to Dei-sechen to watch carefully over Temüjin.

154 Yellow Steppe.

155 This conversation happened in the year 1170.

156 *Mönglik* meant 'mole' (naevus) in Orkhon Turkish. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 224–225. Yisügei-ba'atur refers to Mönglik later in this section as *chaqa,* 'child' or 'infant' (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 312).

157 In 1270.



CHAPTER TWO

[69] Rather than disobey the words of Yisügei-ba'atur, Mönglik went to Dei-sechen and said, 'My master Yisügei misses Temüjin greatly. His heart aches. I have come to take Temüjin away.' Dei-sechen said, 'If quda is missing his son, then let him go. After he has seen him, let the son swiftly return.' Father Mönglik took Temüjin back.

[70] That spring, the two qatut[158] of Ambaqai Qahan, Örbei and Soqatai, visited [the boundary of] the ancestors' land. Lady Hö'elün arrived late, for they had failed to wait for her. To Örbei and Soqatai, Lady Hö'elün said, 'Is it because Yisügei-ba'atur is dead and my children are not yet grown up that you think to keep from me a share of the ancestors' offerings, the bile'ür offerings and the sarqud offerings? Before my very eyes, you eat [without inviting me to join you]; without waking me, you intend to leave.'[159]

[71] On hearing these words, the two qatut Örbei and Soqatai said,

'Do you have a special right to eat
[when we] summon you?
You have the right to eat
when you come by chance [on food].
Do you have the right to eat
[when we] invite you?
You have the right to eat

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158 Ladies.

when you arrive [in time].

Is it because you thought [to yourself], "Ambaqai Qahan is dead," that even you, Hö'elün, speak against us in this way?'

[72] 'We must find some way of leaving those mothers and [their] children behind in the camp when we set out,' they said. 'Do not take them when you go!' The next day, the Tayichi'ut man Tarqutai-kiriltuq, together with Tödö'en-girte and others of the Tayichi'uts, set off down the Onon River, leaving behind Lady Hö'elün, the mothers, and the children. When Charaqa, the old Qongqotat man, chided them, Tödö'en-girte replied,

'The deep water has dried up and
The shining stone has worn away.'[160]

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159 This quite complicated passage has been translated in various ways. Most translators rely on the Chinese interlinear notes to make sense of the rather obscure terminology. *Yekes-e qajaru,* here translated as 'ancestors' land' (i.e., graves of the ancestors) is glossed in Chinese as 'in the big lands'. (See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 306.) At the time of the History, women of noble families were not allowed to approach ancestors' graves unless dressed as daughters-in-law. The line or boundary around the graves was known as *inaru* (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 107–108). The Chinese text gave this word as *inerü,* which is meaningless, and left it unglossed (cf. De Rachewiltz, who translates *yekes-e qajaru inerü* as 'the sacrifice to the ancestors consisting of offerings of food burned in the ground'). It was the Mongol custom to offer food, kumiss, and meat at the graves of ancestors (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 108, n. 2). *Bile'ür* ('the *bile'ür* offerings') basically means 'left-over food', but here it has the specific meaning of 'sacrificial meat' (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 150). *Sarqud* was an Orkhon Turkish word meaning left-over tea and food given to servants. In this context, however, it means the same as *bile'ür* (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 234–235). This is one of many instances in the History where a Mongol term and its Orkhon Turkish synonym are used together.

[With these words, they moved off] They said to the old man Charaqa, 'Why do you reprove us?' From behind, they struck him in the back with a spear.

[73] Wounded, the old man Charaqa returned to his yurt. As he lay down in pain, Temüjin came to see him. The old Qongqotat man, Charaqa, then said to Temüjin, 'All our people gathered together by your good father have been taken on a journey. When I chided [those who took them], they did this to me.' Temüjin wept and went out. Lady Hö'elün, who had been left behind when they set off, raised the flag[161] and set out on horseback. She herself fetched back half the people. Those who had been persuaded to return, however, did not remain but set off again after the Tayiji'uds.[162]

[74] And so the Tayichi'ut brethren set out and left behind in the camp the widowed Lady Hö'elün, her little ones, and the mothers and their children.

Lady Hö'elün, born a woman of wisdom,
raised her little ones, her own children.
Wearing her high hat tightly [on her head],[163]
hoisting her skirts with a sash,
she ran upstream along the Onon's banks,
gathering ölirsün and moyilsun
with which to nourish their gullets day and night.
Born with gall, the Lady their mother,
reared her fortunate children.
Wielding a pointed stick of juniper,

160 This passage means that everything has come to an end.

161 The flag was said to be the army's eye, the drum its ear. Chinggis told Shigi Qutuqu: 'Be my eye and ear.' See Sections 203 and 252.

162 Tayichi'ut.

163 I.e., the high hat (*boqta,* an Orkhon Turkish word) worn by Mongol noblewomen (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 151–152).

she dug up südün and chichigina and nourished them.
With wild onions and garlic
The sons of the noble mother were nourished,
Until they became rulers.
The sons of the patient noble mother,
Were reared on elm seeds.[164]
And became wise men and lawgivers.
[75] With qoqosun and wild garlic
the beautiful lady raised
her admirable sons.
They became high officials and fine men.
They grew up to be good men.
They became powerful and brave.
They said among themselves,
'Let us support our mother.'
Sitting on the banks of Mother Onon,
They prepared lines and hooks
with which they caught
maimed and misshapen fishes.

164 Joos, 'lilium concolor'.

165 Fruits and vegetables: *ölirsün* is a birch-leaf pear (Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 125–126); *möyilsün* is prunus mahaleb (Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 229); *südün* is the root known as sangui-sorba officinalis (Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 244); *chichigina* is the root known as potentilla (Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 244); *qaliyarsun* ('wild onions') is allium victorialis (Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 169); *manggirsu* ('wild garlic') is allium senescens (Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 221); *qoqosun* is allium lineare (a wild leek or shallot). Fish: *jebüge* is a scorpion fish or white fish (De Rachewiltz translates it as salmon); *qadara* is a scad (salmo thymallus -Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 175). A *chilüme* net was used for catching land animals (Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 316), while a *gubchi'ur* net was a large fishing net (Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 205–206). *Shülsü* ('gall', Section 74) means (as in English) courage or fortitude (Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 244).

Bending needles into fishhooks,
they caught jebüge and qadara.
Tying chilüme nets and gubchi'ur nets,
They scooped up small fishes.
[Thus,] they gratefully supported their mother.[165]

[76] One day, when the four [brothers], Temüjin, Qasar, Bekter,[166] and Belgütei, were sitting alongside one another pulling in [their lines], they caught a bright fish. Bekter and Belgütei snatched the small fish away from Temüjin and Qasar. Temüjin and Qasar went to the yurt and said to their noble mother, 'A bright minnow bit the hook and was snatched away from us by our two brothers Bekter and Belgütei.' The noble mother said, 'Desist. Why do you, older and younger brothers, behave in such a way towards one another?

Apart from our shadows we have no friends,
apart from our tails we have no fat.[167]

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166 Bekter, used here as a proper name, means 'armour' in Mongolian; it derives from the Orkhon Turkish word for armour and military equipment more generally. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 147.

167 The 'fat' referred to in this passage is the thick deposit of fat that builds up on the tails of Mongolian sheep (*chichu'a* in the Orkhon Turkish dialect); it is a store of food for the sheep (like a camel's hump) and a source of food for Mongol people. The Chinese interlinear gloss wrongly translates the word in question as 'whip' ('We have no whips but our tails'); both Cleaves and De Rachewiltz follow this translation. But even if we accept that *chichu'a* means 'fat', there are still two possible interpretations of the line: 'we have to rely on ourselves for food—no one will give it to us' (that given here); and 'we have no fat on our tails', i.e., 'we have no food'. The former is more in keeping with the tone of the proverb from which the phrase is taken. (See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 317.)

Just when we are thinking of how to settle our score with our Tayichi'ut kinsmen, you behave as like Mother Alan's five sons once did. Why do you not work together? You must cease to behave in such a way.'

[77] Temüjin and Qasar were not happy with their mother's words. They replied, 'Only yesterday we shot down a lark with a horn-tipped arrow and they snatched it away from us. Now they have done the same again. How can we live together?' Throwing aside the door-felt, they went out. Bekter was sitting on top of a small hill, watching over the horses, pale-bay geldings. Temüjin stalked up from behind while Qasar stalked up from in front. As they approached, aiming[168] their arrows, Bekter saw them and said, 'We are unable to endure the bitterness that our Tayichi'ut kinsmen have caused us and ask ourselves, "Which of us will settle the score?". Why make me to be dirt in your eye, a fish-bone in your mouth? [169] At a time when

> Apart from our shadows we have no friends,
> apart from our tails we have no fat,

how can you think to do this thing? Do not extinguish my hearth-fire, do not forsake Belgütei!' Having spoken these words, he sat cross-legged and waited. Temüjin and Qasar shot at him[170] from in front and from behind, and then departed.

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168 The Chinese interlinear gloss has 'drawing out' instead of 'aiming at'. According to Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 234, however, the latter is the correct meaning of *sambaju.*

169 According to Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 242, the original *surmusun* (or *sorimusun,* 'eyelash') is a mistake for *sormusun,* 'filth'. *Qaqasun,* glossed in the Chinese note as 'thorn', actually means 'fishbone' (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 167). Hence, both impurities, which come from outside the body (a metaphor for 'from outside the family'), may harm the body. Quite why Bekter, Temüjin's half-brother, should feel ostracised and end up being killed while Belgütei, his brother, is fully accepted (see, for example, Section 131) is not clear.

[78] They arrived at the yurt. As they entered, the noble mother, sensing from the look on their faces [what had happened], cried out, 'You destroyers!

Accidentally issuing from my hot [womb],
this one was born holding a black clot of blood in his hand.
Like the qasar[171] dog gnawing on its own afterbirth,
like a panther attacking on a rocky mountain,
like a lion unable to control its anger,
like a monster[172] out to swallow [its prey] alive,
like a gerfalcon attacking its own shadow,
like a pike swallowing in silence,
like a male camel biting the heel of its young,
like a wolf [stalking under the cover of] a snowstorm,
like the yellow falcon[173] eating its young, which it is unable to drive away,

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170 The word *ötermelejü,* translated here as 'shot at', derives from the Orkhon Turkish *öter,* to beat or kill. Frequently in the History, actions by Chinggis Qahan that are in some way dishonourable or reflect badly on his character are treated elliptically or described in euphemisms or in non-Mongol vocabulary, as in this instance. Euphemisms can be found in Section 113, where *arbilabai* ('economised') is used instead of 'captured' or 'plundered' (i.e., Chinggis 'saved' the people) and Section 136 (see n. 154, chapter 4), where *büte'ejü* ('covering up') is used instead of 'suffocating'. (For *ötermelejü,* see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 128).

171 Qasar, the name of Temüjin's brother, also meant 'wild or furious beasts'. However, according to a Mongol myth, two dogs were born from the two eggs of a phoenix, one called Qasar and the other Basar. (Qasar is today used as a nickname for yellowish brown dogs). The two names, in the forms Hasaar and Basaar, also occurred in the sacrificial prayers of shamans in the Dawr area. For Qasar, see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 173.

172 According to Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 221, *manggus* means 'monster' or 'bogey' (cf. *manggei* is the Dawr dialect). However, the Chinese interlinear gloss translated this word as 'boa'.

like a jackal protecting his den when he is touched,
like a tiger that does not hesitate to seize [its prey],
like a long-haired dog rushing rashly [at his prey]—
thus you have destroyed!
Apart from our shadows, we have no friends.
Apart from our tails, we have no fat.

At such a time, when our bitterness towards our Tayichi'ut kinsmen knows no limit, when we are asking which of us will settle the score, you think only about how we shall live [among one another], and you do this to one another.'

Citing old sayings,
quoting the words of old men,
she berated her sons violently.

[79] Not long after this, Tarqutai-kiriltuq of the Tayichi'uds led up his sentries and said,

The lambs are shedding their [fleeces],
the sheep are growing up.[174]

The mothers and sons and the older and younger brothers took fright and built a barricade in the thick forest. Tearing down trees and dragging them together, Belgütei built a stockade. While Qasar countered the enemy's arrow-shots,

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173 The text says *anggir* ('yellow'), which the Chinese interlinear note glosses as 'mandarin duck'. Since the mandarin duck is not particularly known for its ferocity or intolerance, 'yellow falcon' *(anggir shiba'u)* seems more appropriate.

174 Two words here require explanation. I translate *qoluqat* as 'lambs', since it clearly derives from the word *qoraqat,* 'lambs'. In Mongol, the letters r and 1 are often interchangeable. In the Dawr dialect, for example, people say *sanggal* instead of *sang-ger,* 'warehouse'. *Shiluget* means 'sheep' (plural). For details, see Choiji 1984, pp. 101–102. The basic meaning of this saying is that those who were once merely children (Temüjin and his brothers) are now grown up and present a threat.

the [other] three—Qachi'un, Temüge and Temülün—slipped into a narrow defile and battled on. Then the Tayichi'uts shouted, 'Send out your older brother Temüjin. We have no need for the rest of you'. [Hearing] Temüjin thus summoned, they mounted him on a horse and made him escape through the forest. The Tayichi'uts, seeing him, gave chase. On Tergüne Heights, he slipped into a thicket that the Tayichi'uts could not penetrate. So they surrounded the thicket and watched over it.

[80] Having spent three nights in the thicket, Temüjin decided to go out.[175] As he led his horse forth, its saddle worked loose and fell off. Turning round, he saw that the saddle-strap and the breast-strap were still attached, yet the saddle had come loose and fallen off.[176] He said, 'As for the saddle-strap, so be it, but how can the breast-strap have come loose? Could this be a warning from Heaven?' He turned back and spent another three nights [in the thicket]. As he set out again towards the entrance to the thicket, a white rock, the size of a tent, fell and blocked the opening. 'Could this be a warning from Heaven?' he asked himself. He turned back and spent a further three nights in the thicket. Finally, after being there for nine nights without food, he said to himself, 'How can I die without a name! I will go out!' Blocked by the white rock, the size of a tent, the opening was impassable, [so] he cut through the trees [around it] with his arrow-maker's knife and slipped his horse through. As soon as he emerged, the Tayichi'uts on guard [outside the thicket] captured him and took him away with them.

[81] After taking Temüjin away, Tarqutai-kiriltuq ordered his people to allow Temüjin to stay one night in each of their camps in turn. While this was happening, on the sixteenth day of the first month of summer, the 'red circle day',[177] the Tayichi'uts feasted together on the banks of the Onon, and dispersed at sunset. Temüjin was escorted to the feast

175 In 1177.

176 A Mongolian saddle has two straps on either side.

by a weak young man. As the people left the feast, he pulled away the [rope of the] cangue[178] from the weak boy, struck him on the head, and ran. 'If I lie down in the Onon forest, I will be seen,' he thought. So he lay down in the torrent, with his head held back so that the cangue floated in the current. There he lay, with only his face above the water.

[82] The man who had lost him cried out in a loud voice, 'I have lost the hostage!' The Tayichi'uts, who had dispersed, reassembled. Under a moon as bright as day, they searched the Onon forest. Sorqan-shira of the Süldüs, [179] who was passing by, saw [Temüjin] lying in the torrent. He said to him, 'It must be because you are so clever that people say

There is fire in his eyes
and light in his face.

Because you are so clever, you have made your Tayichi'ut kinsmen jealous. Lie where you are, I shall not tell.' So saying, he went away. 'Let us return and search again,' the [Tayichi'uts] said to one another. Sorqan-shira said, 'Let us go back along the same paths and look where we have not searched, and then return [to this place].' They agreed to this suggestion and went back along the same paths, searching [as they went]. Sorqan-shira again passed by [Temüjin]. 'Your kinsmen are approaching,' he told him,

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177 The 'Red Circle Day' was the sixteenth day of the fourth lunar month, the first month of summer during which the pasture begins to grow again. It was therefore a time for celebrating.

178 *Buqa'u* ('cangue') was a wooden board, sometimes clamped around the neck, with fetters or holes to restrain the hands. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 155. When Temüjin's cangue is later removed (Section 85), the verb used *(chuchalju)* shows that the cangue was fastened with ropes that may also have restrained Temüjin. (For *ckuchalju,* see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 319).

179 Suldus.

'sharpening their mouths and teeth. Lie down, be steadfast!' So saying, he passed by.

[83] Again, they said to one another, 'Let us return and search [again].' Sorqan-shira said, 'You Tayichi'ut nobles[180] have lost a man in the bright light of day. How can we expect to find him in the dark night? Let us go back along the same paths and look where we have not searched, and then return [to this place]. After searching, we disperse. Tomorrow, we reassemble and look [again]. Where can a man go with a cangue around his neck?' They agreed and returned to search. Sorqan-shira again passed by [Temüjin] and said, 'We have agreed to return. After searching [for you] in this way, we will look [again] tomorrow. Wait until we have dispersed. Then go and seek your mother and your younger brothers! If anyone sees you, do not say that you saw me or that you have been seen.' So saying, he left.

[84] When the [Tayichi'uts] had dispersed, [Temüjin] thought to himself, 'I was made to stay the night in each of their camps in turn. Yesterday, when I stayed in Sorqanshira's yurt, his two sons, Chimbai and Chila'un[181] felt badly in their hearts. On seeing me at night, they loosened my cangue, so that I was able to spend the night [in greater comfort]. Again, when Sorqan-shira saw me, he passed by without telling [anyone]. Perhaps he will now save me, in the same way.' With this idea in mind, [Temüjin] went downstream along the Onon River in search of Sorqan-shira's yurt.

[85] The mark of a yurt was that, after pouring the mares' milk, they churned the kumiss all through the

180 *Köüt,* used here to mean 'nobles', usually meant 'sons'. It referred in particular to the sons of the Tayichi'ut noblemen, the direct descendants of Ambaqai Qahan. (For this person, see Sections 47 and 52.) It is used in the sense of nobles in Sections 269, 270, and 272 of the History (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 216).

181 Chila'un later became one of Chinggis Qahan's 'four marshals' (see Sections 177 and 209).

night, until the break of day. 'As I proceed, I shall hear that sign,' [thought Temüjin]. He arrived, and heard the sound of the churning. When he entered the yurt, Sorqan-shira said to him, 'Did I not tell you to seek out your mother and your younger brothers? Why have you come here?' But his two sons, Chimbai and Chila'un, said, 'When the magpie hides[182] in the bush from the sparrow-hawk, the bush saves it. Now that he has come to us, how can you speak to him in such a way?' Displeased by their father's words, they untied his cangue and burned it on the fire. At the back [of the yurt] was a cart full of sheep's wool in which they made him sit. They bade their younger sister Qada'an[183] care for him, and to tell no living person.

[86] On the third day, [the Tayichi'uts] said to one another that someone had perhaps hidden [Temüjin]. 'Let us search among ourselves,' they decided. Searching among themselves, they looked in Sorqan-shira's yurt, in his cart, and under the bed. Sitting on the cart full of sheep's wool behind [the yurt], they [began to] pulled the wool out. They were just about to reach [Temüjin's] foot when Sorqan-shira said, 'In such heat, who could bear [to hide] inside the wool?' The searchers climbed down and departed.

[87] After they had left, Sorqan-shira said, 'You almost caused me to blow [in the wind] like ashes! Go now and seek out your mother and younger brothers.' He put him on a white-mouthed, tawny barren mare, cooked him a fat lamb,[184] and prepared for him a small leather bag and a large leather bag [full of kumiss]. He gave him no saddle or

182 Previous translators follow the Chinese interlinear note, which takes the verb *qorqobasu* to be causative, and translates it as 'to make (someone) hide'. In fact, it is a transitive verb *(qorqo* or *qorqa)* and means 'hide'. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 179–180.

183 Qada'an later became one of Chinggis Qahan's wives, the Queen of the 'Fourth Palace' (see Sections 146 and 219). For details of the Fourth Palace, see Li Zefen 1970, p. 182; for details of the First, Second and Third Palaces, see Li Zefen 1970, 165–175.

tinder-pouch, but he did provide him with a bow and two arrows.[185] Having prepared these things [for him], he sent him on his way.

[88] After setting out, Temüjin reached the place where [his mother and brothers] had built the barricade. He followed tracks in the grass upstream along the Onon River and came to the place where the Kimurqa Stream enters it from the west. After getting this far upstream, he met [his mother and brothers], then living above the Kimurqa stream on the Qorchuqui Hill of the Beder Spur.

[89] After their reunification, they went to camp by Lake Kökö[186] on the Senggür Stream[187] on Qara-jirügen[188] Mountain in the Gürelgü [Mountains] on the southern side of Burqanqaldun [Mountain]. While there, they killed and ate marmots and field mice.

[90] One day, when the eight horses, the light bay geldings, were standing by the yurt, thieves came. Before [Temüjin and his brothers] realized what was happening, they stole [the horses] and fled. Being on foot, [Temüjin and his brothers] were left behind and could only watch. Belgütei had ridden off to go hunting for marmot on a bald-tailed chestnut horse. In the evening, after sunset, he returned on foot, leading the bald-tailed chestnut laden

184 This 'fat lamb' *(tel)* was fattened on the milk of two ewes and therefore especially succulent. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 259.

185 Sorqan-shira refuses to give Temüjin a tinder-pouch so that he will not be tempted to start a fire and sleep at night rather than ride on until he finds his family. He gives him two arrows, so that he can protect himself in an emergency but not initiate combat. He gives him a mediocre horse and denies him a saddle, possibly so that if he is captured, there will be nothing to identify him with Sorqan-shira. For these ideas, see Dorontib 1979, p. 48, n. 12.

186 'Blue Lake.'

187 After his marriage to Börte (Section 94), this camp became Chinggis Qahan's 'First Palace'. For details see Li Zefen 1970, pp. 173–174.

188 'Black Heart.'

with marmots that swung to and fro. [Temüjin and his brothers] told him that thieves had taken the light bay geldings. 'I will chase after them!' said Belgütei. But Qasar said, 'You are not capable. I shall chase after them!' Temüjin said, 'None of you can, I shall pursue them.' He rode off on the chestnut horse, following the light bay geldings' tracks in the grass. Having spent three nights [in pursuit], the next morning he came across a strong, handsome youth milking mares in a large herd of horses. He asked the youth about the light bay geldings. The youth replied, This morning, before sunrise, [someone] drove eight light bay geldings through here. I will show you the path they took.' He bade Temüjin exchange the bald-tailed chestnut for a black-backed grey horse, while he himself rode a swift dun. Without even returning to his yurt, he hid his leather bag and bucket in the open field. 'My friend, you have exhausted yourself in coming here. All men suffer in common. I will accompany you. My father is known as Naqu-bayan.[189]1, his only son, am called Bo'orchu.'[190] They spent three nights and days following the tracks of the light bay geldings. On the evening [of the fourth day], when the sun shone on the hills, they arrived at a camp of people.[191] They saw the eight light bay geldings grazing at the edge of the large camp. 'My friend, stay here,' said Temüjin. 'I shall drive out the light bay geldings.' But Bo'orchu said, 'I came as a friend. How can I stand by?' They rushed in and drove out the light bay geldings.

[91] The [camp-dwellers] started in pursuit of them, one after the other. One man, alone on a white horse and

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189 'Naqu the Rich.'

190 Bo'orchu later became one of Chinggis Qahan's 'Four Marshals' - see Sections 202, 205, 209, etc.

191 This is a circular military camp, with carts arranged in a ring. *Güri'en,* the word for such a camp, appears again in Section 205; *güre'en* (a variation on it) appears in Sections 120, 122, 177, and 213; *gre'et* appears in Section 129. See also Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 207.

holding a pole-lasso,[192] drew close. 'My friend,' said Bo'orchu, 'give me the bow and arrow! I will shoot at him.' But Temüjin said, 'I do not want you hurt for my sake. I will exchange arrows with him!' With those words, he swung round and fired arrows at the pursuer. The man on the white horse stopped and brandished his lasso at [Temüjin]. His companions caught up with him. But as they reached him, the sun set and dusk fell. Those remaining were lost in the darkness; they stopped and were left behind.

[92] After travelling throughout that night and the next three days and nights, [Temüjin and Bo'orchu] arrived. Temüjin said, 'My friend, without you, I could never have recovered these horses. Let us divide them. Tell me how many you will take.' But Bo'orchu said, 'I thought of you as a good friend when you [first] arrived exhausted, and I thought to help you as a good friend. I came as your companion. How could I think of profiting from these events? My father Naqu-bayan is well known; I am his only son. That which my father possesses is more than enough for me. I will take nothing. [Otherwise,] what sort of help will I have given? I will take nothing.'

[93] They arrived at Naqu-bayan's yurt. [Thinking that] he had lost his son Bo'orchu, Naqu-bayan was snivelling and weeping. On seeing his son suddenly arrive, he alternately cried and scolded. His son Bo'orchu said, 'What is it? When my good friend arrived exhausted, I went as his companion. Now, I have returned.' He galloped off to the open field and brought back the leather bag and bucket that he had concealed. They killed a fat lamb for Temüjin and gave it to him to eat on the way. They fastened a leather bag [of kumiss] to the front of his saddle. As they did these things, Naqu-bayan said, 'You two are young. Look after one another. From now on, do not abandon one another!' After travelling for three days and three nights, Temüjin arrived at his yurt by the Senggür stream. His

192 This lasso, used to catch horses, consists of a long pole with a leather loop on the end.

mother Hö'elün, Qasar, and his younger brothers, who had worried [about him in his absence], rejoiced on seeing him.

[94] Temüjin and Belgütei set off down the Kelüren River[193] to look for Lady Börte, [the daughter of] Dei-sechen, from whom [Temüjin] had been separated ever since visiting her when he was nine years old. Dei-sechen, the Onggirat, lived between the two [mountains] Chekcher and Chiqurqu. On seeing Temüjin, Dei-sechen rejoiced greatly and said, 'I knew that your Tayichi'ut kinsmen were jealous of you. I was troubled and in despair. But at last you are here [again]!' [Dei-sechen] then united him with Lady Börte and then set off with them. Dei-sechen accompanied them on their journey as far as Uraq-chöl on the bend of the Kelüren before turning back. His wife, Lady Börte's mother, was called Chotan. Chotan accompanied her daughter into the Gürelgü mountains and took her to [Temüjin's family], living at that time on the Senggür stream.

[95] [Temüjin] sent Chotan [home] and then bade Belgütei go to Bo'orchu and say, 'Let us be companions.' Bo'orchu welcomed Belgütei. Without saying [anything] to his father, he came together with Belgütei

Riding a chestnut horse with a hunched back,
tying his grey woollen cloak across [the saddle].

And this is how [Temüjin and Bo'orchu] became companions.

[96] From the Senggür stream they moved [their] camp to the source of the Kelüren River. Dismounting, they camped at Bürgi-ergi.[194] [Börte's] mother Chotan had brought a black sable jacket as shitkül.[195] The three of them, Temüjin, Qasar, and Belgütei, took the jacket and departed. In earlier days, [their] father Yisügei Qan and the Ong Qan of the Kereyit people[196] had agreed to swear brotherhood together.[197] 'He who has agreed to swear

193 In 1178.

brotherhood with my father is almost as a father to me,' said [Temüjin to himself]. Knowing that the Ong Qan was living on the Tu'ula [River][198] in the Qara-tün,[199] [the two brothers] went there. When they arrived, Temüjin said to the Ong Qan, 'In earlier days you and my father agreed to swear brotherhood, so you are almost as a father to me.' Then he said, 'I have acquired a wife and brought you the *emüsgel*[200]'. *Temüjin* gave the Ong Qan the sable jacket. Greatly pleased, the Ong Qan said:

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194 'Muddy Banks.'

195 *Shitkül,* a kind of wedding present or dowry, has already been mentioned in Section 66 of Chapter 1. It is a present from the bride's to the groom's family. The word derives from *shitk,* to add, increase, or assist. See also Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 252–253. Later in this section, the jacket is referred to as *emüsgel,* another type of *shitkül,* in the form of clothing. The bride gives this jacket to the groom's parents when she first meets them. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 100. In this instance, however, Börte's mother brings it as a gift for Temüjin's parents.

196 To'oril qan does not actually become the Ong Qan until the events described in Section 134. Ong is a Chinese title meaning 'prince' or 'king'. The Kereyits were among the largest tribes in Mongolia at this time; some of their descendants still live in the Baarin of Inner Mongolia today. For more details, see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 211.

197 *Anda,* 'sworn brotherhood', is one of the two main relationships in the History, the other being *nökör* (see Section 13 and Chapter 1, note 91). While *nökör* implies an unequal relationship, like that between master and retainer, *anda* implies friendship and mutual aid between equals or partners. Chinggis Qahan built his great empire on these two relationships and, to a lesser extent, on the *quda* relationship, i.e., marriage (see Section 62 and note 150). For more information on *anda,* see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 87.

198 The Tu'ula River flows through the southern half of present-day Ulaan Baatar, capital of the Mongolia, to join the River Orkhon. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 263.

199 'Black Forest.'

In return for the black sable jacket
I will bring together
the people who abandoned you.
In return for the sable jacket,
I will unite your scattered people.
[Let my thoughts]
be in the depths of my bowels
and in my backbone.[201]

[97] On their way back, while on the banks of the Bürgi, an old man of the Uriyangqad tribe, Jarchi'udai, came from Burqan-qaldun with his bellows on his back, leading his son, Jelme.[202] Jarchi'udai said, 'When you were at Deli'ün-boldaq on the Onon, when Temüjin was born, I gave [him] swaddling clothes of sable. I also gave [you] this my son, Jelme. Thinking, however, that he was [too] small, I took him away with me. Now let Jelme put on your saddle! Let him open your [felt] door!' With these words, he gave [his son to Temüjin].

[98] Early one morning, while they were camping at Bürgiergi at the source of the Kelüren, when the light of the dawning day was [still] yellow, Qo'aqchin, the old

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200 'New clothing.'

201 A literal translation of the last two lines of this poem would read: 'In the buttocks of my rectum, in the chest of my bones, be there.' For poetic effect, the subject and object of each line are reversed; 'be there' means 'may my thoughts be there.' Old men commonly expressed themselves in this way; the expression was based on the Mongol perception of the body as being divided into upper and lower halves. By citing both chest and bowels, Ong Qan is implying wholeheartedness. The Chinese interlinear note mistakes *bökör-e* (in the bowels, in the lower half of the body) for *bö'er-e* (in the kidneys), a mistake echoed in subsequent translations. *Boko'or* means 'bowels' in the Dawr dialect; *cheker-e* should read *seker-e (seger-e),* 'in the thoracic vertebra' (ch- and s- are interchangeable in Mongol). I have therefore translated *sekere* as 'backbone'.

202 Jelme later became one of Chinggis Qan's four great generals.

woman who worked in the yurt of Mother Hö'elün, rose up and said, 'Mother! Mother! Rise quickly! The earth is shaking! I can hear the sound of swift horses' hooves. Are the terrifying Tayichi'uts coming? Mother, rise quickly!'

[99] Mother Hö'elün said, 'Make haste to waken the children!' Mother Hö'elün [also] rose quickly. Temüjin and the other sons, also rising quickly, caught hold of their horses. Temüjin rode one horse, mother Hö'elün rode one horse, Qasar rode one horse, Qachi'un rode one horse, Temüge-otchingin rode one horse, Belgütei rode one horse, Bo'orchu rode one horse, and Jelme rode one horse. Mother Hö'elün took Temülün to her breast and placed her at the front of the saddle. They made ready one horse as a led horse.[203] [Thus] Lady Börte was without a horse.

[100] While it was still early, Temüjin and all the brothers rode off towards Burqan. The old woman Qo'aqchin hid Lady Börte in a black covered[204] cart with a wooden frame harnessed to an ox with spots on its back. [The two women] followed the Tenggelik upstream, in the glimmering light of dawn. Some soldiers trotted [past] and then turned back. 'Who are you?' [the soldiers] asked. The old woman Qo'aqchin said, 'I am Temüjin's [servant]. I came to shear sheep in the great yurt[205] I am now returning to my own yurt.' The soldiers then asked, 'Is Temüjin in his yurt? How far is his yurt?' The old woman Qo'aqchin said, 'The yurt is not far away. I do not know if Temüjin is there. I rose and left from the back [of his yurt].'

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203 I.e., either a baggage-horse or a horse that can be ridden occasionally to allow one of the others to rest or, if injured, to be carried. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 218. Although Börte could probably have ridden this horse, it is essential to the plot that she is left behind. As De Rachewiltz has pointed out (1971–1984, 4, p. 162), the horse brought by Bo'orchu (Section 95) would bring the family's total up to ten, not nine.

204 There is no Chinese gloss for the word translated here as 'covered [by a frame]', but the actual word used, *böken,* meant 'hunchbacked' in the Orkhon Turkish dialect. Here it refers to the 'ribs' of the frame that supported the cart's cover. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 158.

[101] Hearing these words, the soldiers trotted off. The old woman Qo'aqchin beat the ox with the spotted back. As [she and Lady Börte] moved quickly off, the axle of the cart snapped. 'The axle is broken! Let us go into the forest on foot and run!' they said [to one another]. Straight away, however, the soldiers arrived at a trot with Belgütei's mother mounted behind [on one of the horses], her legs dangling. As they approached, they said, 'What are you carrying in this cart?' The old woman Qo'aqchin said, 'It is loaded with sheep wool.' The senior soldiers said, 'You juniors and boys, dismount and take a look.' The Juniors and boys dismounted. As soon as they removed the door of the closed cart,[206] [they found] someone who seemed to be a [young] lady sitting there. They pulled the woman down from the cart, put both her and Qo'aqchin behind them on their horses, and rode off with them. Following Temüjin's tracks in the grass, they went up towards Burqan.

[102] They went three times round Burqan-qaldun in pursuit of Temüjin, but could not find him. Temüjin fled this way and that. In the sinking mud, the thick woods, and the dense forest, [they were like] glutted bears,[207] unable to creep in. [Although] they followed behind him, they could not find him. The three Merkits [pursuing Temüjin] were Toqto'a of the Uduyit-Merkits, Dayir-usun of the Uwas-Merkits, and Qa'atai-darmala of the Qa'at-Merkits. These three Merkits, knowing that Mother Hö'elün had been abducted from Chiledü, had now come to take revenge.

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205 I.e., the 'master's yurt' or 'palace of the Qan'. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 307.

206 The 'closed cart' had a wooden door or barrier that was lifted in and out of place. *Qa'atai* ('closed') is not glossed in the Chinese and is taken by De Rachewiltz to be a proper name ('Qa'atai took off the door of the cart…'). See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 163.

207 Although the Chinese marginal note gives 'snake' instead of 'bear', *moqaiya* derives from the Orkhon Turkish *mokai,* a large male brown bear. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 227–228. In any case, 'glutted bear' would seem to make better sense than 'glutted snake'.

The Merkits said to each other, To avenge [the abduction of] Hö'elün, we will carry off their women. We have taken our revenge.' So they came down from Burqan-qaldun and returned to their yurts.

[103] Temüjin wondered if the three Merkits really had returned to their yurts or were lying in ambush. He sent Belgütei, Bo'orchu, and Jelme the Merkit to find out. They followed the Merkits for three days until the Merkits disappeared and escaped. Temüjin then came down from Burqan and said, beating his breast, 'Because mother Qo'aqchin

hears like a weasel
and sees like an ermine,
she saved my life.
On the dotted tracks,
[I] followed the deer trails.
I made a yurt of willow.
I climbed Burqan.

On Burqan-qaldun,
my life was like that of a louse.
I managed to flee.
My only life was spared.
With only one horse
I followed the elk trails.

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208 *Maliyasuqai,* 'sacrifice', was an Orkhon Turkish word. Cf. *mai,* butter or fat. *Maliyaqu* could also mean 'to serve or entertain'. For details of how the Mongols used butter and kumiss in celebrations and sacrifices, see Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 223–234.

209 The sash was a symbol of a person's power. To take off one's hat before praying was a sign of respect towards Heaven. The hat was also a symbol of power and authority; in Section 255, *yeke maqalai* (big hat) is used to mean 'mighty authority'. Nine, a highly auspicious number, appears frequently in the History.

I made a yurt of twigs.
I climbed Qaldun.
On Qaldun-burqan,
my life was like that of a swallow.
I was protected.'

'I was greatly afraid. Every morning I shall sacrifice[208] to Burqan-qaldun, and every day I will pray to it. The seed of my seed shall know this,' he said. Facing the sun, he draped his sash round his neck and hung his hat [by its cord] from his arm. He beat his chest with his hand. Kneeling nine times towards the sun, he gave offerings and prayers.[209]



CHAPTER THREE

[104] When they had finished talking, all three of them Temüjin, Qasar, and Belgütei—went to To'oril, the Ong Qan of the Kereyits, who was staying in the Qara Forest beside the Tu'ula River. They said: 'While we were [still] inexperienced[210] [in such things,] the Three Merkits came and robbed me of my wife and of [my unborn] son.[211] We have come to ask you, Qan my father, whether you can restore my wife and son to me.' To'oril Qan replied: 'Did I not say [as much] to you last year? When you brought the sable jacket to me you said that, in your father's time, I

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210 Literally, 'at the time of being innocent, naive people' *(genen)*. *Genet,* the plural of *genen,* is easily confused with *genete,* sudden or suddenly. De Rachewiltz apparently makes this mistake when he translates the passage as 'taking us by surprise'. For *genen,* see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 201.

211 There is no previous reference in the History to this son. Most translators render *eme kö'ü* (literally, wife-child) as 'wife', on the grounds that it is a compound (of which there are many other examples) in which only the first element has meaning. (See Mostaert 1953, pp. 324–327.) However, the compound lacks the 'feel' of other such compounds, which are usually alliterative. Moreover, the obvious explanation is that Temüjin is saying that Börte is pregnant. Shortly after Börte's rescue, she gives birth to a son, Jochi (1179–1225) (see Section 165). However, although Chinggis Qahan later passes over Jochi (see Section 255) and appear not to favour him, he never denies his as own son. Hence the implication that Börte was pregnant by Temüjin when captured and the use of the term *eme-kö'ü*. For the pregnancy of Lady Börte, see Saishiyal 1987, p. 1165.

and your father swore brotherhood together, and that I am therefore as a father to you. When you placed the coat on me, I spoke these words:

In return for the black sable jacket
I will bring together
the people who abandoned you.
In return for the sable jacket,
I will unite your scattered people.

And I said:

[Let my thoughts]
be in the depths of my bowels[212]
and in my ribcage.

Did I not say those words? Now I will stand by them.

In return for the sable jacket,
I will crush the Merkits
and rescue Lady Börte for you.
In return for the black sable jacket,
I will break all the Merkits into pieces
and bring back your qatan Börte.

Send a message to [your] younger brother Jamuqa, who is in the Qorqonaq Forest. I will set out from here with twenty thousand men to form the right flank. Tell [your] younger brother Jamuqa to take twenty thousand to form the left flank. Let Jamuqa decide the time and place [of our meeting].'

[105] When Temüjin, Qasar, and Belgütei arrived at their yurt after visiting To'oril Qan, Temüjin told Qasar and Belgütei to take the following message to Jamuqa. 'Tell [my] sworn brother Jamuqa that the three Merkits

212 See Section 96, note 201.

made my bed empty.
Are we not one family?
How can we gain vengeance?
My heart is broken.
Are we not blood relatives?[213]
How can we take revenge?'

This was the message that he sent to [his] sworn brother Jamuqa. He also told [Qasar and Belgütei] to repeat to Jamuqa the words of To'oril, the qan of the Kereyits: 'In former days, your father, Yisügei Qan, helped me and did good by me; remember, [Temüjin], that I will be a companion to you. With twenty thousand men, I will form the right flank and do battle. I will set out from here with twenty thousand men to form the right flank. Tell [your] younger brother Jamuqa to take twenty thousand into battle. Let Jamuqa decide the time and place [of our meeting].' When these words [had been conveyed to] Jamuqa, Jamuqa said: Temüjin, [my] sworn brother,

my heart aches,
knowing that your bed is empty.
My liver aches,
knowing that your heart is broken.
Let us gain vengeance [by]
destroying the Uduyits and Uwas-Merkits.
Let us rescue our Lady Börte.
Let us avenge ourselves
by breaking the Qa'at-Merkits into pieces.
Let us restore our qatun Börte,
Let us bring her back and save her.

Now,

213 Literally, 'liver relatives' *(heligen-ü uruq).* See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 191.

Toqto'a the Nervous,
takes the flapping of the saddle cloth
for the beating of drums.
[Toqto'a] must be on the Bu'ura Steppe.
When Dayir-usun the Treacherous
[sees] the swaying of the bow-nock and the quiver[214]
[he flees].

Now [Toqto'a] must be on Talqun Island [between] the Orkhon and the Selengge.

When the tumbleweed[215] blows,
Qa'atai-darmala the Disputer[216] [flees]
into the dense forest.
Now he must be
on the Qaraji Steppe.[217]
We must cut across the Kilqo River.
Let the sedges[218] be abundant.
Binding up our rafts with them,

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214 The Chinese interlinear note translates *dabchitu qor* ('bow-nock and quiver') as 'a quiver with a cover'. However, *dabchi* means either 'the nock of a bow' or a type of bow with a long string. (See Lessing, *Dictionary,* p. 212.) The commitative case-ending *-tu* must therefore be a mistake in the original or in the Chinese transliteration. Moreover, a quiver is of more use without a cover. 'Bow-nock and quiver' would therefore seem to be the meaning of this passage. (See also, Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 275.) For *dabchi,* see Beijing Mengwen shushe 1956, p. 197.

215 *Qamqa'ulsun,* 'tumbleweed', i.e., corispermum mongolicum iljin or salsula oppositifolia.

216 A more literal translation of 'the Disputer' would be 'the contender'. There is also an implication of cowardice—*qara hoi temechekchi* could mean 'he who strives for the dense forest', i.e., a coward.

217 See Section 102.

let us go.

That nervous Toqto'a—

we will strike through the smoke hole [of his yurt],
smash and knock down
his door frame,[219]
rob and destroy
his wife and son,
break and knock down
his sacred door frame,
rob his entire people
until they are empty.

[106] Again, Jamuqa said: 'Tell [my] sworn brother Temüjin and [my] elder brother To'oril the following: For my part,

I have made offerings[220]
to the spear-tipped banner,[221]
I have beaten the rumbling drum
made of the black bull's hide.
I have ridden my swift black [horse],
I have put on my strong clothing,
I have grasped my iron-tipped spear,

218 *Saqal bayan* is 'sedge', cyperus rotundus (or carex meyeriana). The strands of sedge will be used to bind together rafts with which to cross the river.

219 Doors had a symbolic importance for the Mongols, as the means of ingress and egress. Mouths were similarly regarded. Destroying the door and its frame was an allusion to destroying the family inside.

220 Such an offering involves sprinkling kumiss or milk onto the banner.

221 *Qara'a*—the tip of a spear or lance surmounting a banner or flag—is translated in the Chinese interlinear note as 'to be seen from afar', but this is an error. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 170.

I have set my peach-bark[222] arrow
[against the string].
Let us ride against the Qa’at-Merkits.

Tell [Temüjin] all this.

I have made offerings
to the long spear-tipped banner,
I have beaten the cow-hide drum
that sounds with a deep rumble,
I have ridden my swift grey [horse],
I have put on my leather-thonged armour,
I have grasped my hilted sword,[223]
I have set my notched arrow [against the string].
Let us battle to the death against the Uduyit-Merkits.

Tell [Temüjin] all these things. When [my] older brother To’oril Qan sets forth, he [should] make his way to my sworn brother Temüjin by the south side of Burqan-qaldun and follow the Onon River to its source at Botoqan-bo’orji. Let us meet there. I will ascend the Onon River to where my sworn brother’s people wait. The ten thousand [men] of [my] sworn brother’s people and the ten thousand [of my own men] will constitute [a force of] twenty thousand. Following the Onon River to [its source at] Botoqan-bo’orji, the appointed place, we shall join forces.’ So saying, he dispatched [this message].

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222 *Qatqurasu* is ‘peach bark’, caragana arborescens.

223 Here is one of many instances in the History of a term that is effectively untranslatable. *Onggitu üldü,* translated here as ‘a hilted sword’, is a sword in which the hilt and blade are separate. Although the Chinese interlinear note describes *onggi* as a handle, it is in fact the hole in the handle (or hilt) into which the tongue of the blade fits. The term was probably used to distinguish between this sword and other swords that were forged in one piece. See Ozawa Shigeo 1984–1986, vol. 2, p. 272, n. 9.

[107] Qasar and Belgütei returned and told Temüjin what Jamuqa had said. [Temüjin] then sent the message on to To'oril Qan. On hearing these words of Jamuqa, To'oril Qan set out at the head of twenty thousand [men]. 'When To'oril Qan sets out, he will come towards the Bürgi bank of the Kelüren on the south side of Burqan-qaldun,' thought Temüjin, who was on the Bürgi bank; 'and [I] am in his path.' So he yielded, and moved upstream along the Tünggelik to the Tana Stream on the south side of Burqanqaldun, where he set up camp. From there, Temüjin and his army set out. The ten thousand [men] under To'oril Qan and the ten thousand under To'oril Qan's younger brother, Jaqa-gambu,[224] twenty thousand altogether, set up camp at Ayil-qaraqana on the Kimurqa Stream. At that point, [Temüjin] joined [them] and set up camp.

[108] After joining forces, Temüjin, To'oril Qan, and Jaqa-gambu moved towards the source of the Onon River at Botoqan-bo'orji, where [they found] Jamuqa, who had reached the appointed place three days earlier. On seeing the armies of Temüjin, To'oril, Jaqa-gambu, and the others, Jamuqa lined up his own army of twenty thousand men. After lining up their own armies, Temüjin, To'oril Qan, Jaqa-gambu, and the others went to acknowledge [one another]. But Jamuqa said:

'Even if a snowstorm
stands in the way of the appointment,
even if rain
hinders the meeting, we [should] not be late.

Did we not so agree? [When] we Mongqols say 'yes', are we not bound by oath?

224 Jaqa-gambu was actually called Keraidi. As a boy, he had been captured by the Tang'uds, who brought him up and named him Ja (land or earth) gambu (great general). See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 290.

We should cast from the ranks
those who fall short of the agreement.'[225]

On hearing Jamuqa's words, To'oril Qan said: '[As you say], we have arrived three days late at the appointed place. It is for you, younger brother Jamuqa, to punish and reprove us.' And so they talked together about their failure to keep to the agreement.

[109] From Botoqan-bo'orji, they moved to the Kilqo River, where they lashed together rafts to cross over to the Bu'ura Steppe.

They entered Toqto'a-beki's yurt
through the smoke hole,
smashed and knocked down
the door-frame,
robbed and killed his wife and son,
broke and knocked down
his sacred door-frame,
and crippled and robbed
his entire people.

While Toqto'a-beki was sleeping, some fishermen, sabletrappers, hunters, and sentries had arrived from the Kilqo River. Throughout the night they had taken word that the enemy was on his way. When the message reached Toqto'a, he joined Dayir-usun of the Uwas-Merkits and the two men went downstream along the Selengge to Barqujin[226] [territory]. They escaped [with just] a few of their men.

[110] The Merkit people fled at night in panic down the Selengge.[227] Our soldiers, despite the darkness, followed

225 Those who fall short of the agreement': literally, 'those who came late to [saying] yes' *(je deche qojidaqsan). Je* means 'yes, agreement, obligation'. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 296.

226 Toqto'a defected in the direction of the enemy by heading towards the northeast. See Dorontib 1979, p. 71.

closely on their heels, robbing and looting. Temüjin went [among] the panic-stricken fugitives, crying, 'Börte! Börte!' Lady Börte, who was among those fleeing, heard and recognised Temüjin's voice. She got down from the cart and ran towards him. Both Lady Börte and Qo'aqchin recognized Temüjin's rein and tether, [even] in the night, and seized them. By the light of the moon, [Temüjin] recognised Lady Börte. At this unexpected meeting, they embraced. The same night, Temüjin sent word to To'oril Qan and [his] sworn brother Jamuqa to say: 'I have found what I sought. Let us not continue through the night but pitch camp here.' The Merkit people, fleeing in panic and scattering through the night, set up camp in the same place and spent the night there. This is how Lady Börte met [Temüjin] and was saved from the Merkit people.

[111] Previously, Toqto'a-beki of the Uduyit-Merkits, Dayirusun of the Uwas-Merkits, and Qa'atai-darmala [of Qa'ad], the three Merkits with three hundred men, had said: 'Earlier, Yisügei-ba'atur captured Mother Hö'elün from Toqto'a-beki's younger brother, Yeke-chiledü, and took her away.' [Thus] they had taken their revenge. While circling Burqan-qaldun three times [in pursuit of] Temüjin, they had captured Lady Börte. Chiledü's younger brother, Chilger-bökö, had been made to keep her. After keeping her [for some time], however, Chilger-bökö abandoned [her] and escaped, saying:

The black crow,
though fated to eat [scraps of] skin,
wished to eat goose and crane.
I, Chilger, unfortunate and ugly,
laid hands on the Lady, the qatun,
and brought calamity on all the Merkits.
Ignoble and bad Chilger,
your own black head[228] will receive [a blow].

227 This incident happened in 1179.

I have only one life to save.
I wish to creep into a dark gorge,
But who will shield me?
The bad bird, the buzzard,
though fated to eat rats and mice,
wished to eat swan and crane.
I, Chilger, who am doubly[229] bad,
became the keeper of the fortunate and mighty Lady,
and brought calamity on all the Merkits.
Crippled and bad,
my bony head will receive [a blow].
My life is worth no more than sheep's dung.
To save it, I will creep into the dark[est] part of a dark gorge.
My life is worth no more than sheep's dung.
Who will [put a] fence [around] me?[230]

With these words, he turned and fled.

[112] They captured Qa'atai-darmala and brought him back.

They put a cangue upon him
and sent him off towards Qaldun Burqan.

Belgütei's mother was said to be in that [particular] yurt, so Belgütei went to rescue her. [However], when he entered the yurt through the right side of the doorway, his mother, in ragged sheepskin clothing, departed through the left door.[231] Outside, she said to another person: 'I have been told that my sons have become qans, whereas I am joined with a common man. How can I look into the faces of my

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228 'Black' in this context implies common.

229 *Qunar (qoyar)* means two or double; for *qoyar,* see Choiji 1984, p. 139. *Qunar* also means 'dirty' (see Dorontib 1979, p. 76, n. 6).

230 Chilger had tried to act above his station, like the crow and the buzzard.

sons?' So saying, she ran off and slunk into the thick forest. During his fruitless search for her, Belgütei-noyan fired horn-tipped arrows at the men of Merkit bone, saying: 'Bring back my mother.' The three hundred Merkits who had circled Burqan and their descendants' descendants were crushed and blown away like ashes. Those of the surviving wives who could be embraced were embraced [as concubines]; those of the surviving children who could be admitted through the door were admitted [as slaves].[232]

[113] Temüjin expressed his respectful thanks to both To'oril Qan and Jamuqa: 'After gaining the friendship of you, Qan, my father, and you, Jamuqa, [my] sworn brother, my power has been increased by Heaven and Earth.

Appointed by mighty Heaven
and escorted by Mother Earth,[233]
we made man's enemy, the people of the Merkits,
empty their breasts
and tore their livers in half.
We emptied their beds
and destroyed [their] kinsmen.
Did we not also capture[234] the survivors?

In this way, the Merkit people were demoralised. 'Let us [now] withdraw', [Temüjin and the others] said to one another.

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231 For the significance of the left door, see p. 94, n. 236.

232 Those who could be embraced', i.e., the wives of the Merkits. Those who could be admitted through the door', i.e., the children of the Merkits. For *ebüritbe* (embraced, reared, fostered, saved from danger), see Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 99–100.

233 'Mother Earth' *(etügen)* refers to a Shamanist goddess of the earth (see Lessing, *Dictionary,* p. 335). It is also a personification of 'the Motherland'. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 105.

[114] While the Uduyit-Merkits were fleeing in panic, our soldiers found a boy who had been left behind in the camp. He was five years old, with fire in his eyes. His name was Küchü.[235] He [wore] a hat of sable, boots made of the skin of a doe's forelegs, and a raiment sewn together from suede otter [skins]. The soldiers took him to Mother Hö'elün and gave him to her as a battle prize.

[115] Temüjin, To'oril Qan, and Jamuqa came together and

razed the bartering yurts
and ravished the tall-hatted women[236]

of the Merkits. [After this,] they withdrew from Talqun Island between the Orqan[237] and Selengge Rivers. Temüjin and Jamuqa, uniting, withdrew in the direction of the Qorqonaq Forest. To'oril Qan withdrew by way of the Hökörtü[238] Foreston the northern side of Burqan-qaldun, the Qacha'uratu-sübchit [Pass], and the Huliyatu-sübchit

234 Literally, 'did we not also economise the survivors'. This euphemism *(arbilabai)* for 'plundered' also appears in section 115 and 117; it is used out of respect for Chinggis Qahan. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 94–95.

235 'Strength.'

236 For a long time during the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911), the Dawr Mongols bartered once a year at Yin Chin Tung village near Tsitsihar (Chichihar, Hijagaar—'frontier'—in Mongol) in Manchuria. The Dawrs called the bartering house 'Chorgan Ger'. This house was periodically in use and had two doors. Hence Belgütei entered through the right door in search of his mother who had gone out through the left door. (See Murakami 1970–1976, vol. 1, p. 210, n. 23.) It is not clear whether some particular kind of yurt is meant or whether *chorqan* is used simply to balance *choqtai eme* ('tall-hatted women') in the next line. *Choqtai* derives from an Orkhon Turkish word *choq,* a bunch of feathers worn on a woman's hat or a knob or button crowning a man's hat to indicate official rank. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 317.

237 Orqon.

[Pass], where he hunted wild beasts before heading for the Qara Forest[239] on the Tu'ula [River].

[116] Temüjin and Jamuqa pitched camp together in the Qorqonaq Forest. Recalling how they had sworn brotherhood with one another, they renewed their brotherhood, swearing to love one another. The first time that they had sworn brotherhood, Temüjin was eleven. Jamuqa had given Temüjin a roebuck's knucklebone and Temüjin had given Jamuqa a copper-[filled] knucklebone in exchange,[240] and [so] they had sworn brotherhood. After agreeing to become brothers, they had played knucklebones on the ice of the Onon [River], calling each other sworn brother. The [following] spring, when they had competed against each other with pinewood bows, Jamuqa had given Temüjin a whistling arrow head that he had [made] by gluing [together] the horns of a two-year-old calf and boring holes into it to make it sing. In exchange, Temüjin had given Jamuqa a horn-tipped arrow with a butt of cypress wood and they had again become sworn brothers. This is how they renewed their brotherhood.

[117] In earlier days, old men used to say: 'Men who are sworn brothers [share] one life. They do not abandon each other but become protectors of that life.' Thus [Temüjin and Jamuqa] loved each other. Renewing their bond of brotherhood, they said: 'Let us love one another.' While looting the Merkit Toqto'a, Temüjin had obtained a golden sash that he made his sworn brother Jamuqa wear. He [also] gave [Jamuqa] Toqto'a's horse, a fawn stallion[241] with a black mane and tail. Jamuqa made his sworn brother Temüjin wear the golden sash that he had looted from Dayir-usun of the Uwas-Merkits and also gave him Dayir-usun's horse to ride. It was white [like] a kid and had a horn.[242] The [two men] swore their brotherhood and their

238 *Huker* means 'cow' in the Dawr dialect.

239 'Black forest.'

240 To create a copper knucklebone, molten copper was poured into the hollow of the bone. The product was used as a gaming piece. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 315.

love [for one another] at the Saqlaqar[243] Tree on the southern side of the Quldaqar Cliff in the Qoronaq Forest. They enjoyed a feast, followed by more feasting. At night, they slept together under one quilt.

[118] Temüjin and Jamuqa remained companions for one [whole] year[244] and for half of the next year. One day, they decided to forsake their camp. They set off on the sixteenth day of the first month of summer, the red circle day. Temüjin and Jamuqa walked together in front of the carts. As they proceeded, Jamuqa said: 'My sworn brother Temüjin,

let us camp near the mountain,
a suitable place
for our horse-herders to pitch their bark-tents.
Let us camp next to the river,
a suitable place
for our shepherds and the keepers of our lambs
to fill their gullets.'[245]

Temüjin failed to understand these words. Standing in silence, he was left behind. He waited for the carts in the middle of the group. As the group passed by, he said to Mother Hö'elün: 'My sworn brother Jamuqa said:

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241 *Esgel qali'un* 'fawn gelding'. *Esgel* is a mare that produces a foal only every three years or more. The foal therefore suckles longer and is strong enough to run up to one hundred miles a day at the age of only two. *Qali'un* means 'yellowish-brown' ('horse' is, as always, understood). It refers to a stallion rather than a mare. (Otherwise it would be in the feminine form, *qaliuqchin*.) To this day, Mongols do not give female animals as presents. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 104–105. See also De Rachewiltz 1971–1984, p. 104, n. 21.

242 The 'horn' referred to is a callous protuberance on the forehead or temple of the horse. See De Rachewiltz 1971–1984, p. 171, March 1972.

243 'Many-leaved.'

244 In 1181.

"Let us camp near the mountain,
a suitable place
for our horse-herders to pitch their bark-tents.
Let us camp next to the river,
a suitable place
for our shepherds and the keepers of our lambs
to fill their gullets."[246]

I failed to understand his words, and gave no reply. I thought instead that I would come and ask you, Mother.' Before Mother Hö'elün had uttered a sound, Lady Börte said: 'Your sworn brother Jamuqa is said to tire easily. The time has come for him to tire of us. Your sworn brother's speech is probably directed against us [as part of a conspiracy]. Rather than pitch camp, we should continue on our journey and part company [with him]. Let us move on through the night without delay.'

[119] [Temüjin] agreed with Lady Börte. They moved on through the night without pitching camp. Midway on their journey, they passed through Tayichi'ut [territory]. The Tayichi'uts took fright. That same night, they set off by mistake in the direction of Jamuqa's [camp]. A small boy called Kököchü[247] had been left behind in the camp of the Besüd Tayichi'uts. Our men took him from the camp and presented him to Mother Hö'elün. Mother Hö'elün [subsequently] brought him up.

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245 Jamuqa implies that the horse herders and shepherds should be separated, i.e., that he himself and Temüjin should each go his own way. Horses, cows, and camels eat tall grass, whereas sheep and goats eat short grass, so they should not be pastured in the same place.

246 Jamuqa wished to part company with Chinggis: the two men were engaged in a power struggle, and Jamuqa was only too aware that Chinggis was adept at absorbing his potential rivals.

247 In the Orkhon Turkish dialect, *kököchü* meant 'a seller of herbal medicines'. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 217.

[120] [Temüjin's party] travelled through the night and, at daybreak, saw Qachi'un-toqura'un, Qaraqai-toqura'un, and Qaraldai-toqura'un of the Jalayirs. The three Toqura'un brethren had travelled together through the night. Qada'andaldurqan of the Tarqut and his brethren, the five Tarqut, had also come, as had Mönggetü-kiyan's son Önggür and others with their Changshi'ut and Baya'ut [followers]. From the Barulas came Qubilai[248] and Qudus and their brethren. From the Mangquts came the two brothers Jetei and Doqolqucherbi. Bo'orchu's younger brother Ögölen-cherbi[249] left the Arulats and came to join his older brother. Jelme's younger brothers, Cha'urqan and Sübe'etei-ba'atur,[250] left the Uriyangqans and came to join Jelme. From the Besüd came the two brothers Degei and Küchügür. Chilgütei and Taki from the Suldus also came, [together with] the Tayichi'ut brethren. From the Jalayirs came Seche-domoq and Arqai-qasar and Bala [with] his two sons. From the Qongqotans came Söyiketü-cherbi. Jegei and Qongdaqor's son Sükegei-je'ün of the Sükekens came. Chaqa'an-uwa of the Ne'üdeis came, as did Kinggiyadai of the Olqunu'uds, Sechi'ür from the Qorolas, and Mochi-bedü-ün from the Dörbens. Butu of the Ikires came, for he was a son-in-law [of Temüjin's family]. From the Noyakins came Jungshai.[251] From the Oronars came Jirqo'an. From the Barulas came Suqu-sechen, together with his son Qarachar. The old man Üsün and Kökö-chös of the Ba'arins also came, together with one camp of the Menen-Ba'arins.

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248 Qubilai later became one of Chinggis Qan's four great generals.

249 In Section 90, Bo'ochu says that he is the only son of his father, Naqu-Bayan. Ögölen-cherbi must therefore be classificatory brother, or cousin. *Cherbi* is a title belonging to a rank, either civil or military. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 314.

250 Sube'etei-ba'atur later became one of Chinggis Qan's four great generals.

251 Jüngshai or Junggei.

[121] Qorchi came, saying: 'We were born of the woman that Bodonchar Boqdo[252] captured; I [shared] one womb with Jamuqa, but sprang from a different seed. We would not have left Jamuqa but for a heavenly sign.[253] A whitish cow was revealed to me. It circled Jamuqa, before butting his yurt-cart. Then it butted Jamuqa [himself], breaking a horn, so that one horn became shorter than the other. "Give me my horn," it bellowed repeatedly, pawing the ground and raising dust. [Then,] a yellowish-white ox lifted the great joist [of the yurt-cart],[254] harnessed [it to itself], and pulled it behind Temüjin along the great road. As it drew nigh, it bellowed repeatedly: "Heaven and Earth agree, let Temüjin be the nation's master." And: "I bear the nation [to him]." These heavenly signs were revealed to me and [these things] were told to me. Temüjin, when you become the nation's master, how will you cause me to rejoice on account of [these things] that I have told [you]?' Temüjin said: 'If what you say is true, if I am to be given charge of the nation, I will make you the commander of ten thousand [households].' [Qorchi said:] 'How could becoming the commander of ten thousand make me, who has foretold such good fortune for you, happy? After I have become the commander of ten thousand, give me the choice of the nation's beautiful and worthy girls and make thirty [of them] my wives. Moreover, whatever I say, [turn] to me and listen.'

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252 Bodonchar was a personal name. *Boqdo* (or *bogd*) meant an ancestor a few generations above that of great great grandfather. Bodonchar was ten generations senior to Chinggis Qahan.

253 'Heavenly sign' *(ja'arin)-.* in Orkhon Turkish, *ja'arin* meant 'to foretell or prophecy'. Divination was practised by examining the grain of a sheep's shoulder bone scorched over a fire. *Ja'arin* had other meanings in other parts of Mongolia. In Ordos, for example, it meant 'midwife'; in Khalkh, it was an honorific term for a shaman; in some parts of Dawr, it referred to an assistant shaman. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 287.

[122] Qunan, leading the Geniges, also brought a camp, as did Daritai-otchigin. From the Jadarans came Mulqalqu, as did Ünjin[255] [of the] Saqayits, together with one camp. In this way, [large numbers of people] left Jamuqa. After travelling along the Kimurqa Stream, they set up camp at Ayil-qaraqana and remained there. The two sons of Sorqatu-jürki of the Jürkins, Sacha-beki[256] and Taichu, together with one camp; Nekün-taishi's son Quchar-beki, together with one camp; Qutula-qan's son Altan-otchigin, together with one camp all left Jamuqa and joined Temüjin, who had set up camp at Ayil-qaraqana on the Kimurqa Stream. From there, they moved into the Gürelgü [Mountains] where they set up camp by the Lake Kökö[257] at Qara-jürügen, by the Senggür Stream.

[123] Altan, Quchar and Sacha-beki, after reaching an agreement, said to Temüjin:[258] 'We will make you qan. When you are qan,

galloping in the vanguard after many enemies,
we will bring in
girls and qatuns of good complexion,
palace tents,
foreigners' qatuns and girls of comely cheek,
and geldings with fine rumps at the trot
and give them to you.
We will hunt the wily beasts
and round them up for you.
We will squeeze together the animals of the steppe for you[259]
until their bellies touch.

254 The yurt-cart, or travelling tent, is used here as a symbol of Chinggis Qahan's future empire.

We will squeeze together the animals of the cliff for you
until their thighs touch.
On days of battle,
should we disobey,
then separate us
from our precious family and our property,[260]
from our qatuns and wives,
casting our black heads
onto the ground.
In days of peace,
should we ignore your counsel,
then exile us
from our men and servants,
from our wives and children,
and cast us out
into the wilderness.'

They agreed upon these words and swore [their] oath. Naming Temüjin 'Chinggis Qahan', they made him qan.[261]

[124] Having become Chinggis Qahan, he [allowed] Bo'orchu's younger brother Ögölei-cherbi to bear a quiver. Qachi'un-toqura'un bore a quiver, as did both the brothers Jetei and Doqolqu-cherbi. Önggür, Söyiketü-cherbi, and Qada'an-daldurqan[262] said:

We shall not suffer [you] to lack
your morning food.

255 Ünjin should read Nünjin, given here as a person's name, but actually the name of a tribe. See Choiji 1984, p. 158, n. 6, and Irenchin 1987, p. 88, n. 1.

256 Seche Beki. See Section 49.

257 'Blue Lake.'

258 This happened in 1189.

259 So that Chinggis can shoot them with ease.

We shall not delay
[your] evening food.

And [so] they became the chief cooks. Degei said:

I shall cook
a three-year-old wether,
[so that] in the morning
[you] will not lack.
At night-time [you] will not be late.
Herding the pied sheep,[263]
I shall fill the bottom of the cart.[264]
Herding the brown ewes,
I shall fill the sheep-fold.
[But] I am greedy and useless,
[so] I will herd sheep and eat [their] bowels.

And so Degei herded sheep. His younger brother, Güchügür, said:

I shall not let the linchpin
of the suspension-strutted cart[265] drop out.
I shall not let the carts
shake to pieces on the broad road.

'I shall build yurt-carts,' he said. Dodai-cherbi said: 'I wish to oversee the women and servants in the yurt.' Qubilai, Chilgütei, and Qarqai-toqura'un, together with Qasar, [were allowed by Chinggis Qahan] to carry swords. [He told them]:

Slice through the necks of the strong.

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260 For the family and property, see Dorontib 1979, p. 91, n. 6.

261 The ceremony took place in 1189, when Chinggis Qahan was 28 years old.

262 Qachi'un is the same as Qaji'un.

Slice through the necks of the strong.
Empty the breasts of the arrogant.

To Belgütei and Qaraldai-toqura'un he said:

Keep the geldings ready[266]
and be [my] equerries.

He said that Tayichi'ut-qutu, Morichi, and Mulqalqu should herd the horses. To Arqai-qasar, Taqai, Sükegei, and Cha'urqan he said:

Be my long-range *qo'ochaq* arrows,
be my short-range *odora* arrows.[267]

Sübe'etei-ba'adur said:

Like a rat
I shall gather with the others,
like a black crow[268]
I shall scoop up with the others[269]
whatever is outside.
Like a windbreak of felt
I shall try together with the others
to protect [you].
Like a windbreak of felt

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263 I.e., a large quantity of sheep.

264 *Alam* means 'bottom, under'. (See the article by Prof. Bürinbatu in the Academic Journal of the University of Inner Mongolia, no. 10, pp. 21–24.) Some scholars argue that *alam* derives from the Orkhon Turkish *aram,* a horse-pen or sheepfold. (See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 93. For *alam,* see also Choiji 1984, pp. 108 and 162.) In my opinion, pied sheep and brown ewes signify a large quantity of best-quality sheep.

265 The word *cho'orqatai* in the text has the same meaning as *emegel modon,* 'saddlewood', and refers to a cart's suspension strut. For details, see Choiji 1984, p. 164, n. 12.

I shall try
together with the others
to shield [your] yurt.

[125] Having become qan, Chinggis Qahan said to both Bo'orchu and Jelme:

'When, apart from my shadow, I had no friends,
you were my shadows.
You eased my mind,
so in my mind you shall stay.'

He [also] said:

'When, apart from my tail, I had no fat,
You were my tail.
You eased my heart,
so in my breast you shall stay.

[Formerly you fought on my behalf] Will you not become the seniors of all these?' Again, Chinggis Qahan said: 'When Heaven and Earth increased my power and gave me their protection, those of you who came [to me] thought [more] of me than of Jamuqa and wished to be my companions. Will you become my fortunate and senior

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266 I.e., keep enough geldings away from the main herd (which may be at pasture some miles away from the yurts) in case of emergency. Hence the escape by Temüjin and the others described in Section 99.

267 Chinggis Qahan's use of hunting terms is metaphorical. *Qo'ochaq refe*rs to a particular duration of hunting, odora to a particular position of a hunter in the hunt. These terms are used to symbolise the different roles of emissaries. *Odora* is the same as *utura* (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 122).

268 See Section 210 for a reference to a black crow.

269 'Gather' and 'scoop up' means 'gather good' (i.e., gold) and 'scoop up food' (i.e., glory).

companions?' And he added: 'I appoint each one of you [to offices] in different places.'

[126] Daqai and Sügegei were sent as emissaries to To'oril Qan of the Kereyits, [Temüjin's father,] to tell him that [they] had made Chinggis Qahan the qan. To'oril Qan said: 'It was right to make my son Temüjin the qan. How can you Mongqols live without a leader? Do not destroy the harmony that you have [established], do not undo the bond that you have [tied], do not tear up your collar.'[270] So saying, he dispatched them.

270 By 'collar', To'oril Qan means the Mongol system of leadership. See Section 33, note 104.



CHAPTER FOUR

[127] When [Chinggis Qahan] sent Arqai-qasar and Cha'urqan as emissaries to Jamuqa, Jamuqa said: 'Go to Altan and Quchar and tell them: "Altan and Quchar, you [have come] between my sworn brother Temüjin and myself,

> poking the flanks and
> piercing the ribs[271]

of my sworn brother. Why did you cause us to separate?[272] Why did you not make him qan when he [and I] were [still] together? By making him qan, what did you intend? Keep to the words that you have spoken. Ease my sworn brother's mind. Be his companions."' So saying, Jamuqa dispatched [the emissaries].

[128] When Jamuqa's own younger brother Taichar was on the south side of [Mount] Jalama at Ölegei-bulaq,[273] he went to steal the herd of horses belonging to our [ally] Jochi-darmala, on the Sa'ari Steppe. Taichar stole Jochidarmala's herd and took them [off]. Jochi-darmala went [after his] stolen herd. When his friends lost heart, he continued on alone. Conducting his pursuit at night, he

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271 'Poking' *(sechijü)* and 'piercing' *(qatquju)* means 'finding fault with' or 'needling'. For *sechijü,* see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 238.

272 See Section 123.

273 'Ölegei Spring.'

[finally] arrived at the side of his herd. Lying flat along his horse's mane, he shot Taichar, breaking his back in two. Having thus killed him, he took his herd and returned.

[129] Hearing of the killing of his [own] younger brother Taichar, Jamuqa and other members of the Jadaran [tribe] allied with thirteen other tribes to form [an army of] thirty thousand [men].[274] They crossed the Ala'u'ut and Turqa'ut [Mountains] and rode out against Chinggis Qahan. Mülke-totaq and Boroldai of the Ikires delivered a message to Chinggis Qahan, at that time in the Gürelgü [Mountains], informing him of Jamuqa's] imminent arrival. On hearing this message, Chinggis Qahan likewise formed [an army] of thirty thousand [men] from [his] thirteen camps and led them out against Jamuqa. They fought at Dalan-baljut, where Chinggis Qahan was displaced by Jamuqa. [Chinggis Qahan] hid at Jerene-qabchiqay[275] by the Onon [River]. 'We have forced him to hide at Jerene by the Onon,' said Jamuqa. Returning, he boiled [alive] the young men of the Chinos in seventy cauldrons.[276] He cut off the head of Chaqa'an-u'a of the Ne'üdeis, [tied] it to the tail of his horse, and dragged it [after him].

[130] After Jamuqa's return, Jürchedei of the Uru'uts, leading his Uru'uts, and Quyuldar of the Mangquts, leading his Mangquts, left Jamuqa and went [over] to Chinggis Qahan. Father Mönglik of the Qongqotads, who had been with Jamuqa, together with his seven sons, left Jamuqa and joined Chinggis Qahan. Chinggis Qahan rejoiced that these people had come over from Jamuqa. The people are coming, he told himself. Chinggis Qahan, Lady Hö'elün, and Qasar, together with Sacha-beki, Taichu, and others of the Jürkins, decided to hold a feast in the forest of the Onon. At the feast, a first jug [of kumiss] was poured for Chinggis Qahan, Lady Hö'elün,

274 This happened in 1190.

275 'Jerene gorge.'

276 They were killed because they might otherwise have helped Chinggis. (They had earlier belonged to the Tayichi'ud people.)

Qasar, Sacha-beki, and others. Next, a first [women's] jug [of kumiss] was poured for Sacha-beki's 'little mother', Ebegei. 'We were not [served] first. Why was [the kumiss] first poured for Ebegei?' asked Qorijin-qatun and Qu'urchin-qatun, and beat the cook, Shiki'ür. 'Why was I beaten? Because [my former masters] Yisügei-ba'atur and Nekün-taishi are both dead,' the cook wailed.

[131] Belgütei, who was holding Chinggis Qahan's geldings [ready], had been in charge of our side of the feast. On the Jürkin side, Büri-bökö was in charge. A Qadagid man stole a tether from the place where our horses were tethered. [Belgütei] captured the thief, but Büri-bökö argued[277] [with him on behalf *off* the man. All his life, Belgütei had been a wrestler. [He was in the habit] of removing his right sleeve and thus baring [his arm]. He removed [his sleeve again now], whereupon Büri-bökö slashed his naked shoulder with his sword. Ignoring the cut, Belgütei let the blood flow. Chinggis Qahan, sitting in the shade, watched [them] from the feast. He emerged and said: 'What has been done to us?' The wound is not [much],' said Belgütei. 'Let us not fall out with our kinsmen on my account. I am not upset. I shall soon mend. Abstain from [acting rashly], older brother, at a time when we are getting on well with our kinsmen. For now, let things rest.'

[132] Instead of following Belgütei's advice, Chinggis Qahan [and his people], pulling branches from the trees and snatching the wooden [kumiss] paddles from the leather bags, fought with the Jürkins and defeated them. They [also] captured Qorijin-qatun and Qu'urchin-qatun. Later, however, they returned them, saying: 'Let us settle our differences'. While emissaries were being exchanged and peace was being made, [Chinggis Qahan] learned that when the Tatar Megüjin-se'ültü[278] and other Tatars had

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277 The Chinese interlinear note gives 'protection' instead of 'argued' for *hoyimaschu* (i.e., Büri-kökö 'protected' the thief). According to Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 196, however, *hoyimaschu* is equivalent to *ayimuschu,* 'to be angry' or 'to scold'.

failed to enter into an agreement with him, the Altan-qan of the Kitad[279] people had told Ongging-chingsang[280] to deploy his soldiers without hesitation [against Megüjin-se'ültü]. Ongging-chingsang was [also] said to be advancing upstream, pushing Megüjin-se'ültü and the other Tatars along the Ulja with their livestock and provisions. On hearing of these developments,

[133] Chinggis Qahan said: 'From days of old, the Tatar people have been our enemies. They have destroyed [our] ancestors and fathers. Now we have reason[281] to launch a joint attack on them.' He sent an emissary to tell To'oril Qan: 'We have heard that Ongging-chingsang, the Altanqan's [commander], is pushing the Tatar Megüjin-se'ültü and the other Tatars upstream along the Ulja [towards us]. They are the ones who destroyed our ancestors and fathers. Let us jointly attack the Tatars.[282] Come quickly, To'oril Qan [my] father.' After this message had been delivered, To'oril Qan said: 'My son is right. Let us launch a joint attack.' Three days later, he assembled his soldiers and set forth. To'oril Qan advanced quickly. Chinggis Qahan and To'oril Qan sent word to the Jürkin Sacha-beki and to Taichu, leader of the Jürkins: 'Now we have an excuse to launch a joint attack against the Tatars, who destroyed our ancestors and fathers. Let us ride out together against [them].' Six days after sending this [message] to the Jürkins, Chinggis Qahan and To'oril Qan,

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278 These two words means 'with a sow's tail; it was perhaps his nickname.

279 Kitan (sing.) and Kitad (plur.) was the name given by the Mongols to the people of the Liao Dynasty (916–1125). Today, the Mongols refer to the Chinese as Kitad.

280 Wanyanxiang Chengxiang.

281 *Qanalqa* means 'excuse' (in the sense of 'reason'), not (as the Chinese interlinear note suggests) 'opportunity'. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 163–164.

282 The Tatars and the Jin rulers were at first friendly, but they later became enemies. At that point, Chinggis joined forces with To'oril Qan to attack the Tatars and thereby avenge his ancestors.

unable to wait [any longer], went down the Ulja with their soldiers. As they were approaching Qusutushitü'en and Naratu-shitü'en[283] on the Ulja, in preparation for an attack together with Ongging-chingsang, the Tatar Megüüin and the other Tatars built a barricade. Chinggis Qahan and To'oril Qan captured Megüjin-se'ültü and others who had helped build the barricade and killed Megüjin-se'ültü. Chinggis Qahan took [Megüjin's] silver cradle and quilt, [which was decorated] with pearls.

[134] Chinggis Qahan and To'oril Qan [went to meet][284] Ongging-chingsang, who told them that they had killed Megüjin-se'ültü.[285] Hearing that Megüjin-se'ültü had been killed, Ongging-chingsang rejoiced. He conferred on Chinggis Qahan the title of 'Ja'ut-quri'[286] and on To'oril of the Kereyits the title of 'Ong'.[287] Thus, Ongging-chingsang created the title 'Ong Qan.' Ongging-chingsang said: 'By jointly attacking Megüjin-se'ültü and killing [him], you have done the Altanqan a great service. I shall tell the Altan-qan of your service and let him decide [whether] to award Chinggis Qahan the greater title of 'Jeutau'.'[288] Ongging-chingsang returned, rejoicing. Chinggis Qahan and the Ong Qan plundered the [remaining] Tatars. After sharing out [the loot], [each] returned to his own yurt and set up camp [again].

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283 The literal meaning of Qusutu-shitü'en and Naratu-shitü'en is Sacred Birch (or Birch Spirit) and Sacred Pine. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 252.

284 For 'went to meet', see Choiji 1984, p. 180.

285 This event took place in 1196.

286 Commander in the Ja'ut Territory. The first part of this title, Ja'ut, was derived from either *jau* suffixed by *t* or by *ja'* suffixed by *ut.* Jau was the name of the Jin Dynasty's frontier army, which consisted of Kitans and Tatars stationed in the Khölön Buir area; *-ut* was a Mongol plural suffix. The second part of the title, Quri, is an Orkhon Turkish word meaning a big chief in charge of several tribes. (For Jau (Jü), see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 305.)

287 King.

[135] While plundering the camp at Naratu-shitü'en where the Tatars had raised their barricade, our soldiers found a small, abandoned boy. He had golden earrings, a nose-ring, and a waistcoat of [gold] satin lined with sable. They took him to Chinggis Qahan, who gave him as a prize of war to Mother Hö'elün. Mother Hö'elün said: 'He must be the son of a noble man. The man's family probably had good origins.' He became the sixth son, the younger brother of her five sons. She named him Shigiken-quduqu [Shigi-qutuqu] and raised him.

[136] Chinggis Qahan's base camp[289] was at Lake Hariltu. The Jürkin took the clothing of fifty of those who had stayed behind at the base camp and killed ten men. When Chinggis Qahan heard that the Jürkins had done these things to those of our people who had stayed behind at the base camp, he was greatly angered and said: 'Why have the Jürkins done this to us? When we held our feast in the Onon Forest, they beat the cook, Shiki'ür, and cut Belgütei's shoulder. After agreeing to settle our differences, we returned Qorijin Qatun and Qu'urchin. We then resolved to launch a joint attack on the Tatars, our enemy, who destroyed our ancestors and fathers. We waited for six days, but the Jürkin did not come. Now, drawing close to becoming enemy, have they[290] become the enemy?' So saying, Chinggis Qahan set out against the Jürkins, who were at Dolo'an-bolda'ut on Ködö'e Island in the Kelüren River.[291] He plundered their people, while Sachabeki and Taichu escaped with [only] a few men. [Chinggis Qahan] caught them up at the Teletu Pass, and took both Sachabeki and Taichu prisoner. 'What did we agree on in former

288 'Commissioner of Pacification.'

289 The word *a'uruq,* meaning 'base camp', i.e., the centre of operations and source of supplies and personnel in times of war, may derive from the name of the U'urag River. The U'urag River is a tributary of the Gen in the Khölön Buir area, the original homeland of the Mongols before their move west. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 86. A'urug in the Dawr Mongol dialect means either 'cave' or 'sturgeon'.

days?' he asked Sacha-beki and Taichu. Sacha and Taichu replied: 'We did not keep our word. Make us keep it now.'[292] Mindful of their oaths, they stretched out their necks [for his sword]. But having caused them to recall their oaths, he suffocated them[293] [instead] and left them where he had found them.

[137] After suffocating Sacha and Taichu, he returned [to the Jürkin camp]. While he was reorganising the Jürkin people, Gü'ün-u'a,[294] Chila'un-qayichi, and Jebke, the three sons of Telegetü-bayan of the Jalayirs, were present in the Jürkin [camp][295] Gü'ün-u'a brought his two sons, Muqali[296] and Buqa, to [Chinggis Qahan] for an audience. He said:

Let them be the slaves
at your threshold.
Should they escape your threshold,
slice [the sinews of] their heels.
Let them be the slaves
of your felt-door.
Should they depart

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290 I.e., the Jürkins.

291 For this place, see Section 282.

292 Sacha-beki and Taichu had sworn allegiance to Chinggis Qahan and had agreed never to forsake him, on penalty of death. See Section 123.

293 The us of the word *büte'ejü,* translated here as 'suffocated', together with the reference in the previous sentence to Sacha and Taichu having 'stretched out their necks', has led some translators to suppose that Chinggis Qahan beheaded the two men. However, it was the custom in Mongolia at the time to avoid shedding the blood of noblemen at the time of their execution. Noblemen were instead tied in a leather sack and either drowned or trampled to death by horses. Chinggis Qahan treated Sacha and Taichu in this way. For fuller details, see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 161, n. 1.

294 Gü'ün-qo'a.

295 Jebke's name means 'winnowing fan' in the Khorchin dialect. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 297.

from your felt-door,
cut out their livers and cast them out.

With these words, he gave [his sons to Chinggis Qahan]. Chila'un-qayichi also brought his sons Tüngge and Qashi to Chinggis Qahan:

'I give [you my sons], saying:
"Let them guard
Your golden threshold."
Should they leave
your golden threshold,
cut their lives short and cast them out.
I give [you my sons], saying:
"Let them lift
The wide felt-door for you."
Should they leave
your wide felt-door,
trample their hearts and cast them out.'

[Chinggis Qahan] gave Jebke to Qasar. Jebke had brought a small boy named Boro'ul[297] from the Jürkin camp. After meeting Mother Hö'elün, he gave [the child to her].

[138] Mother Hö'elün brought up four [boys] in her own yurt: Güchü, found in the Merkit camp; Kököchü, found in the Besüt camp in Tayichi'ut [territory]; Shigiken-qutuqu, found in the Tatar camp; and Boro'ul, found in the Jürkin camp. Mother Hö'elün brought them up in the yurt, saying [to herself]:

296 Muqali, later one of Chinggis Qahan's four marshals, was born in 1170 and died in 1223. His father was called Gü'ün-u'a, though in Choiji 1984, p. 185:3, his name is given as Gü'ün Qo'a (*qo'a* meaning 'beauty').

297 Boro'ul (Boroqul) was born around 1195.

'I shall make them
the seeing eyes of daytime,
the listening ears of night
for my own sons.'[298]

[139] [This is] how the Jürkin people got their name.[299] Ökin-barqaq was the eldest of Qabul Qan's seven sons. His son was Sorqatu-jürki. [Qabul Qan], saying that [Ökin-barqaq] was the eldest of his sons, chose [for him] from among his own people

those with gall in their livers,
those with the strength [in their thumbs]
to shoot their arrows over great distances,[300]
those with hearty lungs,
those with mouths full of anger,
all those
strong men who were good at wrestling
- these [he] chose and gave [to Ökin-barqaq].
They were fierce, arrogant, heartless, and men of gall.

It is said to have been for these reasons that they [were called] the Jürkins. Chinggis Qahan made these arrogant people submit [to him] and destroyed the Jürkin clan. Chinggis Qahan made their people, and the tribes [they ruled], his slaves.

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298 In the original text, the word *kene,* 'by whom', appears, but there is no such word in the *Altan Tobchi* (Choiji 1984, p. 187). I have therefore chosen to ignore it. In Section 252, Chinggis is reported as saying: 'Will you not become my seeing eyes, my listening ears?' See also Section 203.

299 Jürkin is the same as Jürgen. See Section 89.

300 *Honchitan,* 'the ability to shoot over great distances', derives from *hon,* 'great shooting distance'. In 1225, a long-range shooting contest was held on the banks of the Onon. In it, Yesünge, a grandson of Chinggis Qahan, shot an arrow 648 metres. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 194.

[140] One day Chinggis Qahan said: 'Let us make Büri-bökö and Belgütei wrestle each other.' [When] with the Jürkins, Büri-bökö had, [on one occasion,] held Belgütei with one hand, kicking him with one foot, thrown him down, prevented him from moving, and pinned him [to the ground]. Büri-bökö [had been] the tribe's [best] wrestler. [So Chinggis Qahan] made Belgütei and Büri-bökö wrestle each other [again]. Büri-bökö, who had never been beaten, allowed himself to be thrown. Belgütei, unable to force him down, took him by the shoulders and climbed up on his rump.[301] Belgütei looked back out of the corner of his eye. As he caught sight of Chinggis Qahan, the Qahan bit his lower lip. Belgütei understood. Sitting astride [Büri-bökö], he crossed the two [ends of Büri-bökö's] collar, leaned forwards, and jerked back, with his knee against [Büri-bökö's] backbone, which he snapped. Büri-bökö, his back broken, said: 'I should not have been beaten by Belgütei. Being afraid of the Qahan, however, I fell deliberately. By wavering, I have lost my life.' So saying, he died. Belgütei, having broken [Büri-bökö's] back, dragged him away, cast him out, and left. The eldest of Qabul Qan's seven sons was Ökin-barqaq. The next was Bartan-ba'atur, whose son was Yisügei-ba'atur. The next after [Bartan-ba'atur] was Qutuqtu-möngler,[302] whose son was Büri [Bökö]. Büri [Bökö] became a companion of the arrogant sons of Ökin-barqaq, who were alienated from Bartan-ba'atur's sons. As a result, although the tribe's best wrestler, Büri [Bökö] had his back broken by Belgütei and died.

[141] Later, in the Year of the Cock,[303] the Qadagins and the Salji'uts united. [The Qadagins] were led by Baqu-chorogi of the Qadagins. [The Salji'uts] were led by Chirgidai-ba'atur[304] of the Salji'uts. The Dörbens had allied with the Tatars. [The Dörbens] were led by Qaji'un-beki of the Dörbens. [The Tatars] were led by Jalin-buqa of the

301 The author or authors of the History here used the term *sa'ari*— the rump or buttocks of a horse or mule—to demean Büri-bökö. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 232.

302 Münggür.

Alchi-Tatar of the Tatars. [The Ikires] were led by Tüge-maqa of the Ikires. [The Onggirats] were led by Dergek, Emel,[305] Alqui, and the other Onggirats. [The Qorolas] were led by Chonaq and Chaqa'an of the Qorolas. From the Naimans came Buyiruq Qan of the Güchü'üt-Naimans. Qutu, the son of the Merkit Toqto'a-beki, came. Quduqa-beki of the Oyirat came. Tarqutai-kiriltuq, Qodun-örchang, and A'uchu-ba'atur of the Tayichi'uts and other Tayichi'uts came. [All] these various tribes gathered at Alqui-bulqaq[306] and decided to elevate the Jajiradai Jamuqa as [their] qa. They cut up a stallion and a mare and swore brotherhood with one another.[307] From Alqui-bulqaq, they moved off down the Ergüne River. On the wide corner of the peninsula, where the Ken[308] River flows into the Ergüne, they appointed Jamuqa as *gür-qa.*[309] After appointing him as *gür-qa,* they began planning their attack on Chinggis Qahan and the Ong Qan. Qoridai of the Qorolas sent Chinggis Qahan, then in the Gürelgü [Mountains], a message [about] the plan to attack [him]. Chinggis Qahan passed the message on to the Ong Qan, who rushed to join Chinggis Qahan with his troops.

[142] After Chinggis Qahan had brought the Ong Qan [to his camp], [the two men] formed an alliance against

303 1201.

304 Irgiter Ba'atur, for which see *Zhongguo Menggu shi xuehui* 1979, p. 105, n. 2.

305 Amel.

306 'Alqui Spring.'

307 Dergek and Emel are proper names (they appear in section 176 as Terge and Amel; Emel appears in section 278 as Amal), but they were also the names of two places in the Khölön Buir area, now known as Terget Hoolai and Amilaat Oboo. (See Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 259–260). *Buyiruq* (as in Buyiruq Qan) was an official position, but also meant 'command' in the Orkhon Turkish dialect. (See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 158). *Qodun* (as in Qodun-örcheng) meant 'star', and is used as such (in the plural, *hot*) in Section 183 (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 195).

308 Kan, Gegen.

Jamuqa. After discussing their campaign, they set out down the Kelüren River. Chinggis Qahan sent Altan, Quchar, and Daritai ahead, as a vanguard; the Ong Qan sent Senggüm,[310] Jaqa-gambu, and Bilge-beki ahead, as a vanguard. They sent scouts to proceed the vanguard and put a scout-post at Enegen-güiletü. Beyond [Enegen-güiletü], at Chekcher they put a scout-post; beyond [Chekcher], at Chiqurqu, they put a scout-post. Our vanguard, [formed by] Altan, Quchar, Senggüm, and the others, arrived at Utkiya. While they were discussing whether to set up camp [there], one of the scouts from Chiqurqu came galloping up to warn that the enemy was drawing near. After receiving this message, instead of pitching camp, they advanced in the direction of the enemy in order to gather information. After making contact [with the enemy], [Chinggis Qahan and the Ong Qan's vanguard] asked them who they were. [They replied that they were] Jamuqa's vanguard: A'uchu-ba'atur from the Mongqols; Buyiruq Qan of the Naimans; Qutu, son of Toqto'a-beki of the Merkit; and Quduqa-beki of the Oyirat. These four men were serving as Jamuqa's vanguard. Our vanguard shouted at them and they shouted at us. [Our men] shouted: 'It is getting late. We will fight tomorrow.' [Our men] withdrew to join with the main army and spent the night with them.

[143] The next day, [the two armies] marched out to meet each other at Köyiten.[311] They lined up face to face. As they drove each other slowly uphill and then downhill, deploying their troops [as they went]. Buriyuq Qan and Quduqa, who knew [how to use] a magic stone [to bring about wind and rain],[312] conjured up a storm. But the storm turned and came down on them. Unable to continue, they tumbled down the cliffs. Telling each other that Heaven did not love them, they dispersed.

309 'Ruler of all.' Jamuqa became Gür-qan in AD 1201. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 206–207.

310 This name derived from the Chinese *jiangjun,* '[military] general.'

[144] Buyiruq Qan of the Naimans split away [from the others] and headed for Uluq-taq[313] on the southern side of the Altai [Mountains]. Qutu, son of the Merkit Toqto'a, headed for the Selengge [River]. Quduqa-beki of the Oyirat struggled towards the forest and headed for Shisgis, [while] A'uchu-ba'atur of the Tayichi'uts headed for the Onon River. Jamuqa himself plundered the [very] people who had elected him qa. Jamuqa [then] went back down along the Ergüne. As they scattered, the Ong Qan pursued Jamuqa down the Ergüne and Chinggis Qahan pursued the Tayichi'ut A'uchuba'atur towards the Onon. After reaching his people, A'uchu-ba'atur alerted them to take flight. On the other side of the Onon, A'uchu-ba'atur, Qodun-orchang, and the Tayichi'uts organised [soldiers] at Hüle'üd Turastan.[314] They told these soldiers [to prepare] to fight and lined them up in ranks. Chinggis Qahan arrived and did battle with the Tayichi'uts. They seesawed back and forth until evening. Then they passed the night propped up each other at the very spot where they had fought. Those people who had fled [earlier] in panic also arrived. Setting up camp with the soldiers, they spent the night together with [them].

[145] In the fighting, Chinggis Qahan had been wounded in the neck. His attempts to stanch the bleeding failed, so he became anxious. After sunset, they pitched camp right next to each other, on the spot [where they fought together]. Jelme sucked and sucked at the clotted blood [in Chinggis Qahan's wound] [until] his mouth was bloodied.

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311 These events happened in 1202.

312 The Mongols used these 'magic stones' (*jada,* an Orkhon Turkish word) to produce rains. Some 'stones' were actually bezoar, found in the stomachs and intestines of certain animals, especially ruminants. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 295–296.

313 *Taq* means 'big' in Orkhon Turkish.

314 *Hüle'üd turastan* in the text is a mistake for *ülengüd turas-tur,* 'at Ülengüd Turas'. However, no one has identified any such location. See also Choiji 1984, p. 198, n. 7.

Jelme did not trust others to stand guard [over Chinggis Qahan] and sat there until midnight, his mouth full of the congealed blood, which he swallowed or spat out. As midnight passed, Chinggis Qahan returned to consciousness and said: 'The bleeding has stopped. I am thirsty.' Jelme stripped off his clothes, his hat, and his boots, and ran half-naked in his underpants into the midst of the enemy, alongside the position [of his own troops]. He climbed up onto a cart belonging to the adjacent camp in search of kumiss, but could [find none]. The people who had fled in panic had released the mares without milking them. Unable to find any kumiss, he took a large [bowl] of fermenting curds[315] from their cart and took it back [to Chinggis Qahan]. No one had seen him either come or go. Heaven had protected him. After taking back the fermenting curds, Jelme fetched some water and mixed it with the curds. He made the Qahan drink and rest three times. The Qahan then said: 'My mind and eyes are clearing.' As he sat up, day broke and it became light. When he looked around [the place] where he was sitting, [he saw] that the congealed blood that Jelme had sucked and spat out had formed a mire all around him. On seeing it, Chinggis Qahan said: 'What has happened? Would it [not] have been [better] to spit it further [away]?' Jelme replied: 'You were very anxious. I was afraid that if I went [too] far, I might get separated from you. Being in a panic, I swallowed what I [could] and spat out what I [could]. I was in a hurry, so much [of the blood] entered my stomach.' Chinggis Qahan [then] said: 'Why did you run naked into [the enemy's camp] while I was on my back? If you had been caught, would you not have informed them of my condition?' Jelme replied: 'If I had been captured, I intended [to say]: "I wanted to give myself up to you. Realising that this was my intention,[316] [Chinggis Qahan's

315 Used alone, *büri'etei* ('fermenting') means 'covered', which is how other translators render it. However, in conjunction with *taraq* (curds, sour milk), it means 'fermenting'. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 160.

people] seized me and said that they would kill me. The Mongols took off my clothes and were about to take off my underpants. But before they could [do so], I suddenly managed to escape and came to you in this way." They would then have regarded me as sincere and would have given me clothing and cared for me. [But as soon as] I was mounted on a horse, I would have [escaped] under their very eyes and returned [to you]. Such was my plan. I promised myself to quench the Qahan's thirst. So while everyone was watching, I went.' Chinggis Qahan replied: 'What can I say? In earlier days, when the Three Merkits circled [Mount] Burqan three times, you saved my life. Now, by sucking [away] the blood as it dried, you reopened my life. When I was thirsty and anxious, you entered the enemy [camp] without a moment's hesitation, at great risk to yourself. By quenching my thirst, you restored life to me. These three services will stay with me within my heart.'[317] So he decreed.

[146] When day broke, [it was discovered that] the [enemy] soldiers who had passed the night alongside [our own soldiers] had scattered in the course of that same night. As for the people who had camped [there], they had stayed, realising that [the soldiers] would be in no position to escape. To get these fugitives back, Chinggis Qahan set out from where he had spent the night. As he was bringing the fugitives back, a woman in red clothing shouted

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316 Jelme is saying that if he had been caught in the enemy camp, he would have pretended that he had intended to desert and had only just managed to do so after the discovery of his 'treachery'.

317 It is difficult to convey the full flavour of these 'three services' in English. When the Three Merkit encircled Mount Burqan, Jelme 'took out' *(abchu qarulu'a)* Chinggis Qahan's life, i.e., removed him from danger; when Jelme sucked Chinggis Qahan's congealed blood, he 'made empty' *(sengtelbe)* Chinggis Qahan's life, i.e., freed it of obstruction; finally, when Jelme brought the water and curds, he 'entered' (*oro'ulba,* a causative form) Chinggis Qahan's life, i.e., restored to it that which was missing from it.

Temüjin's name from on top of a ridge and stood weeping. Chinggis Qahan heard her and sent a man to find out what man's wife was weeping. The woman told this man: 'I am Sorqan-shira's daughter; my name is Qada'an.[318] Some soldiers here caught my husband and were about to kill him. As [my] husband was being killed, I shouted and wept for Temüjin to save him.' The man returned and told Chinggis Qahan. Hearing these words, Chinggis Qahan trotted up to Qada'an. He dismounted and they embraced. Our soldiers had already killed her husband. After [the fugitives] had been brought back, Chinggis Qahan set up camp with his main [force of] soldiers at the same place and passed the night [there]. He summoned Qada'an and had her sit beside him. The next day, Sorqan-shira[319] and Jebe, both of whom had been subjects[320] of the Tayichi'uts, also arrived. Chinggis Qahan said to Sorqan-shira,

'You cast off
onto the ground
the heavy wood
that was on my neck.
You removed
the pile of wood
that was at my collar.[321]

Was that not a great service, father and sons? Why [then] are you late [in coming]?' Sorqan-shira said: 'In my heart, I told myself that my trust [in you] was certain. [Yet] how could I hurry? Had I hurried and come earlier, my

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318 See Section 85, note 183.

319 There were two subjugated sub-tribes of the Tayichi'uts, called Besüt and Suldus. Jebe was from the Besüts. Sorqan-shara once saved Chinggis Qahan's life. (See Sections 82–87.)

320 The word *tödöge* in the text is derived from the Orkhon Turkish word *tötkön,* 'prisoners of war'. For details, see Choiji 1984, pp. 204–205, n. 11. This *tödöge* has no connection with the word *tödögen* in Section 72.

Tayichi'ut lords would have reduced those that I left behind, my wife and children, my herds and my property, as if to ash, blowing in the winds. With that thought in mind, I did not hurry. Now, however, we have come to unite with our Qahan.' After [Sorqan-shira] had finished speaking, [Chinggis Qahan] said that [he had done] right.

[147] Again Chinggis Qahan said: 'We were fighting [the enemy] at Köyiten, slowly forcing each other to give ground, and deploying our troops when, from on top of that range, [322] came an arrow that broke the nape[323] of my yellow warhorse with the white mouth.[324] Who shot [that arrow] from the mountain top?' Jebe replied: 'I shot the arrow from the mountain top. If I am to be put to death by the Qahan, then I shall be left to rot on a piece of ground [the size of] the palm [of a hand]. But if I am granted [mercy], then I shall go ahead on behalf of the Qahan.

I will attack for you:
I will slash the deep waters

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321 I.e., his cangue. See Section 85.

322 There is an error in the original text. *Tede,* 'they', should be *tende,* 'there', 'on', i.e., 'from on top of that range'.

323 The first cervical vertebra. See Cleaves 1982, p. 74, n. 38.

324 *Aman-niri'u,* 'the nape of the neck', or rather, the first cervical vertebra.

325 The meaning of this poem is that 'no matter how difficult your orders, I shall do as you wish'.

326 In my view, the word used here in the original text is *aju'u,* 'the fact is'; however, other translators read it as *ayu,* 'afraid'.

327 *Jebe* means 'arrowhead'; *jebelegü,* a related word, means 'to armour'. Thus by becoming Jebe, Jirqo'adai replaces the warhorse he has killed. Alternatively, he is so named because *jebe* is the type of arrow he used to kill the horse. His name will therefore be a permanent reminder to him both of his deed and of Chinggis Qahan's mercy. For *jebe* and *jebelegü,* see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 297. Jebe later becomes one of Chinggis Qahan's four great generals.

and erode the shining stone.
At your word, I will go forwards
and smash the blue stones.
If you order me to attack,
I will smash the black stones.
I will attack for you.[325]

Chinggis Qahan said: '[Faced with] those he has killed and with his enemies, the enemy hides and tells lies.[326] [Here,] however, the contrary is true. [Faced with] those he has killed and with his enemies, [this man] does not deny [his feelings and his actions]. On the contrary, he admits them. [This] is a man to [have] as a companion. His name was Jirqo'adai, but because he shot at the nape of my yellow war-horse with the white mouth, he shall be called Jebe [327] and I shall use him as an arrow.' [So] he was called Jebe and ordered to walk at [Chinggis Qahan's] side. This is how Jebe left the Tayichi'uts and became [Chinggis Qahan's] companion.



CHAPTER FIVE

[148] Then Chinggis Qahan plundered the Tayichi'uts. He slew the seed of the seed of the people of Tayichi'ut bones A'uchu-ba'atur, Qodun-orchang, Qudu'udar, and others of the Tayichi'uts—so that they blew [in the wind] like ash. He brought the people of their nation [with him], wintering at Quba-qaya.

[149] Old man Shirgü'etü of the Nichügüt-Ba'arins,[328] together with his sons Alaq and Naya'a, [saw] the Tayichi'uts' lord, Tarqutai-kiriltuq, enter the forests.[329] 'He is an enemy,' they said. They captured Tarqutai and put him in cart, [for] he was unable to ride a horse.[330] While old man Shirgü'etü and his sons Alaq and Naya'a were heading [back] with their prisoner, Tarqutai-kiriltuq's sons and younger brothers drew level [with their party], aiming to rescue him. As the sons and younger brothers drew level [with his party], old man Shirgü'etü sat astride Tarqutai, who was lying on his back, unable to rise. Riding along on top of him, he took out a knife and said: 'Your sons and younger brothers have come to rescue you. Even if I do not kill you, I will be killed for laying hands on my

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328 The Nichügüts ('naked, destitute') were a branch of the Ba'arin tribe. (For details, see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 138.)

329 *Hoilaju* in Sections 149 and 155 should read *oilaju,* which can in turn be read *oimaju; oimaju* (and thus *hoilaju*) mean 'to escape from (his) group'. For details, see Choiji 1984, p. 231, n. 2.

330 Being too fat to ride, he was nicknamed Tarqutai, 'with fat'.

Qan. And if I do kill you, I will also be killed. [So] I wish to die, taking you with me as my revenge.'[331] Riding astride [Tarqutai], he was on the point of cutting his throat with his big knife [when] Tarqutai-kiriltuq cried out in a loud voice to his younger brothers and sons: 'Shirgü'etü is about to kill me. After he has killed me, what [good] will you do by removing my lifeless body? Return quickly before he ends my life. Temüjin will not kill me. When Temüjin was small, it was said that there was

fire in his eyes
and light in his face.

Because of this, I saved him when he remained behind in an abandoned camp and brought him back [with me].

When I taught him,
it seemed that he [could] learn.
[And so] I taught [him]
as [if] training a new colt
[just] two or three years old.
Had I wished to kill him,
I could not have done so?
Now they say that
his intelligence is bursting forth,
his mind is opening.

Temüjin will not kill me. You sons and younger brothers of mine, go quickly back. I fear that Shirgü'etü will kill me,' he cried. His sons and younger brothers conferred. 'We came with the intention of saving our father's life. [If] Shirgü'etü kills him, what shall we do with his lifeless,

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331 When a Mongol commander died, he was buried on top of two dead bodies, one placed under his head as a pillow, another under his feet as a cushion. (For details, see Eldengtei and Ardajab 1986, pp. 425–426, n. 9.) Here, *dere abun,* 'pillowtaking', means consolation or revenge.

empty body? [Shirgü'Zetü] has not yet killed him, so let us return quickly.' Having debated the matter, they returned. Alaq and Naya'a, old man Shirgü'etü's sons, who had been separated [from him], returned and set off [together]. On the way, they came to Quduqul-nu'u. Naya'a said: 'If we take our captive Tarqutai to Chinggis Qahan, he will think that we have laid hands on our rightful Qan. Chinggis Qahan will think [to himself]: "How can those who have laid hands on their rightful Qan be trusted? How can those un[worthy of] companionship be our companions? Those who lay hands on their rightful Qan shall be executed." Will we not be executed? We had better release Tarqutai and send him back. We ourselves will go to Chinggis Qahan and say: "We have come to serve you." We will say: "We captured Tarqutai and were bringing [him to you], but we could not forsake our rightful Qan. How could we kill him? We [therefore] released him and sent him away, [but] we trust you and thought to come and offer you our might." Let us tell [him] that.' Having agreed to these words of Naya'a, the father and sons released Tarqutai-kiriltuq at Quduqul-nu'u and sent him away. When old man Shirgü'etü, together with his sons Alaq and Naya'a, arrived, [Chinggis Qahan] asked: 'Why have you come?' Old man Shirgü'etü replied to Chinggis Qahan: 'We captured Tarqutai-kiriltuq and were bringing [him to you]. Yet after seeing our rightful Qan, we asked ourselves: "How can we let him die? We cannot forsake him." [So] we released him and sent him back. We wish to serve Chinggis Qahan. With that intention, we have come.' Chinggis Qahan said: 'Had you laid hands on your own Qan, Tarqutai, had you laid hands on your rightful Qan, I should have executed all of you and your clan. [But] you were unable to forsake your rightful Qan; your heart was right.' So saying, he showed favour to Naya'a.[332]

[150] Jaqa-gambu of the Kereyits came to Chinggis Qahan, then at Tersüt,[333] to be his companion. At the time of his arrival, the Merkits had come to do battle. Chinggis Qahan, Jaqa-gambu, and the others fought with them and forced them to retreat. Thereupon, Jaqa-gambu] made the

Tümen-Tübegens and the Olon-Dongqayits, scattered peoples [of the] Kereyits, come and submit to Chinggis Qahan. Formerly, in the time of Yisügei Qan,[334] the Ong Qahan[335] of the Kereyits had lived in harmony with Yisügei Qan and the two had decided to swear brotherhood. This is how they swore brotherhood. The Ong Qan killed the younger brothers of his own father, Qurchaqus-buylruqqan. [The Ong Qahan] rebelled against [another] younger brother of his father, Gür Qan. [During the fighting, the Ong Qahan] was forced to take refuge in the Qara'un Gorge.[336] He left with [just] one hundred men. When he reached Yisügei Qan, Yisügei Qan asked him to [return with] him. [Yisügei Qan] set out on horseback [with] his army and chased Gür Qan towards Qashin.[337] He returned [the Ong Qan's] kinsmen to him. As a result, they swore brotherhood.

[151] The Ong Qan's younger brother, Erke-qara, was about to be killed by his elder brother, the Ong Qan, [so] he escaped and went to submit to Inancha Qan of the Naimans. Inancha Qan sent out his soldiers, but the Ong

332 Chinggis believed that people should be loyal only to their masters.

333 Tersüt is an error for Torqod, a clan and place name of the Kereyits. Until now, most scholars have taken Tersüt to be a place name. In Sections 150 and 170, it appears as *turqaq,* which I translate as 'sentry'. This error was corrected by the most important set of source materials, the *Altan Tobchi* (Choiji 1984, p. 233, n. 1). In these materials, *Tersüt* appears as Torqod, a clan name.

334 Actually, Yisügei was never called Qan until the History was written.

335 Qan.

336 The Qara'un ('jet-black') Gorge is located near the Selengge River. (See Jagchid-Sechin 1979, p. 192, n. 2.)

337 Qashin, also known as Hexi, was a small kingdom that held dominion from 1038 to 1227. (For further details, see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 173.) Some Mongol scholars claim that Hexi means 'west of the river', i.e., west of the Yellow River, called Xatun Gol ('Queen's River') by the Mongols.

Qan had gone to Gür Qan of the Qara-kitad,[338] travelling by way of three cities.[339] Having revolted [against Gür Qan], he passed from there through the cities of the Uyiquts and the Tangquts. He ate by milking his five goats, tethered in a line, and by letting the blood of his camels. When he arrived, suffering, at Lake Güse'ür,[340] Chinggis Qahan sent Taqai-ba'atur and Sükegei-je'ün [to him] as ambassadors, for [the Ong Qan] had formerly sworn brotherhood with Yisügei Qan. From the source of the Kelüren, Chinggis Qahan came in person to meet him. Because [the Ong Qan] came hungry and thin, [Chinggis Qahan] raised levies for him, brought him into the camp, and supported him. That winter, the two set out together and Chinggis Qahan wintered at Quba-qaya.

[152] The Ong Qan's younger brothers and lords discussed together: This Qan, our elder brother, has a poor character and a stinking liver.[341] He has done away with his elder and younger brothers, joined with the Qara-kitads, and made his people suffer. What shall we do with him? Shall we talk of former days? When he was seven, the Merkit people captured him and took [him away]. They made him wear a jacket of black spotted kidskin. On the Bu'ura Steppe of the Selengge [River], he ground [grain] in the Merkits' mortar. His father, Qurchaqus-buyiruq Qan, attacked the Merkit people and saved his son there. When he was thirteen, Ajai Qan of the Tatars captured him, together with his mother, and took [him off]. This time he was made to look after [Ajai Qan's] camels. But [it seems that] Ajai Qan's shepherd helped him escape. Fearing the Naimans, Ajai Qan then fled to the Sarta'ul[342] lands. He went to the Gür Qan of the Qara-kitads on the Chui River. [However], before he had been there a year, he rebelled and moved away. He travelled through the lands of the Uiquts

338 I.e., the Western Liao.

339 Tangquts, Uighurs, and Qarlu'uts.

340 In the year 1196.

341 I.e., a wicked heart.

and the Tangquts and endured much suffering. He ate by milking his five goats, tethered in a line, and by letting the blood of his camels. During his sufferings, with no more than a blind black-maned, black-tailed yellow horse, he went to his son Temüjin, who raised levies for him and supported him. Now, he forgets what his son Temüjin did for him and goes [round] with his stinking liver. What shall we do [about him]?' They discussed this matter, and Altun-ashuq secretly reported their discussion to the Ong Qan. Altun-ashuq said: 'I, too, took part in this discussion; however, I cannot forsake you, my Qan.' On hearing these words, the Ong Qan had the parties to this discussion -El-qutur, Qulbari, Arin-taishi, and the others, his younger brothers and his lords—seized. Of the younger brothers, [only] Jaqa-gambu escaped, and joined the Naimans. The Ong Qan put [his captives] in bonds inside his annexed yurt[343] and said: 'What did we decide when we were passing through the lands of the Uiquts and the Tangquts? How can I think [evil], as you do?' And he spat in their faces. He then had their bonds loosened. After the Qan himself had spat on them, all the [others] in the yurt stood up and spat on them too.

[153] After spending that winter [at Quba-qaya], in the autumn of the Year of the Dog,[344] Chinggis Qahan prepared for battle with the Tatars at Dalan-nemürges: the Chaqa'an Tatars, the Alchi Tatars, the Duta'ut[345] [Tatars], and the Aluqai Tatars. Before joining battle, Chinggis Qahan discussed the battle orders [before his soldiers]: 'If we triumph over the enemy, let us not stop for booty. When we have completed our victory, will the booty not be ours?

342 Sarta'ul derives from *sart,* an Orkhon Turkish word that referred to the Muslim peoples living in the cities of Central Asia. It also referred to the Uighurs or Uighur traders, or to the Altaic peoples more generally. (For details, see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 235.) *A'ul* means 'village or settlement' in the Orkhon Turkish dialect. For details, see Choiji 1984, p. 238, n. 7.

343 A small yurt set up alongside a big one.

[Then] we will divide it among ourselves. If the enemy forces us to retreat, let us return to the place from where we began our attack. Those who do not do so will be executed.' In this way, he gave his orders. They fought at Dalan-nemürges and beat the Tatars back. After winning this victory and forcing [the Tatars] to join their people on the Ulqui-shilüeljit [River], he looted them [there]. The important peoples—the Chaqa'an Tatars, the Alchi Tatars, the Duta'ut Tatars and the Aluqai Tatars—were wiped out. [Although Chinggis Qahan] had made clear his orders, three [men]—Altan, Quchar, and Daritai—had not kept to them [but] had [instead] stopped for booty. Pointing out that they had failed to keep to his words, [Chinggis Qahan] sent both Jebe and Qubilai to confiscate the booty—the horseherds, the goods, everything—from those who had taken it.

[154] After wiping out the Tatars and plundering them of everything, Chinggis Qahan [arranged] a great council of his clan to decide what to do with the [Tatar] people. They entered a single yurt and conferred. 'From early days the Tatars have destroyed our ancestors and fathers. [We must] gain vengeance on behalf of our fathers, we must seek revenge for our ancestors. Let them be killed. We will measure them against a linchpin and kill off [those who are taller than the linchpin] until all have died.[346] We will make slaves of the survivors. We will divide them among ourselves, some here, some there.' As they were leaving the yurt after their deliberations, Yeke-cheren of the Tatars asked Belgütei what kind of consultation they had been conducting. Belgütei said: 'We have decided to measure you all against a linchpin and to kill off [those who are taller than it].' Yekecheren told his own Tatar people what Belgüutei had said, and they built a barricade. Our

344 1202.

345 Duta'ut.

346 The Mongols killed only the adults and spared the children (who were shorter than the linchpin) and the women. (Chinggis took two Tatar sisters as wives.)

soldiers surrounded and attacked the barricaded Tatars and sustained great losses. With great difficulty they overcame the Tatars, measured them against a linchpin, and killed them. The Tatars [had] said to each other: 'Let each man hide a knife in his sleeve. We will take [Chinggis Qahan's men] with us when we die.' So we also sustained great losses. [Yet] the Tatars were finally measured against a linchpin and killed off. Chinggis Qahan then issued a decree: 'Because Belgütei revealed the outcome of our great clan consultation, our soldiers sustained heavy losses. From now on, Belgütei will not participate in great councils [but] will remain outside until the council is concluded. He will take charge of all [those outside with him]. Having taken charge, he can judge those who have stolen and lied. After the consultation is over and we have drunk the ceremonial drink, both Belgütei and Da'aritai may enter.' This is what [Chinggis Qahan] decreed.

[155] Chinggis Qahan took [to wife] Yisügen-qatun, the daughter of the Tatar Yeke-cheren. Being loved by him, Yisügen-qatun told [him]: 'If the Qahan favours me, he will care for me, [whether] he considers me a chess pawn or a camel.[347] But my elder sister, called Yisüi, is better than I perhaps she would be a fitter [consort] for a Qan. Recently, a son-in-law came [into our family as her husband]. Where can they have gone in this disorder?' At these words, Chinggis Qan said: 'If your elder sister is better than you, I shall organise a search for her. When your elder sister comes, will you yield to her?' Yisügen-qatun said: 'If the Qahan favours me, as long as I may see my elder sister, I will yield.' Chinggis Qahan [agreed] to [this condition] and ordered a search for [the sister]. Our soldiers encountered her, separated from the group and together with the son-in-law she had been given. Her husband fled and Yisüi-qatun was brought back. Having seen her elder sister, Yisügen-qatun kept her word and, getting up, sat her on the seat

347 Mongolian chess has eight cavalry men (or pawns). *Boda* is a category that includes horses, camels, and cows. This word appears again in Section 195.

where she herself had previously sat. She herself then sat at a lower [level]. Since Yisüi-qatun matched Yisügen-qatun's description of her, Chinggis Qahan took her into his heart. He took her [to wife] and made her sit [as] equal [with his other wives].

[156] One day, after plundering the Tatar people, Chinggis Qahan was sitting outside, drinking with others. As he sat drinking between Yisüi-qatun and Yisügen-qatun, Yisüi-qatun sighed deeply, causing Chinggis Qahan to think. He summoned Bo'orchu, Muqali, and the other lords and told [them]: 'Line up all those who have been gathered together, unit by unit, and set apart those from tribes other than your own.' This decree was issued. When they lined them up, each with his own tribe, one handsome young man stood apart from the tribes. Asked who he was, he said: 'I am the man who was given as son-in-law to the daughter of the Tatar Yeke-cheren, named Yisüi. I was afraid of being plundered by the enemy, [so] I fled. Now that peace has returned, I decided to come back. Thinking that I would not be recognised among [so] many people, I returned.' When Chinggis Qahan heard these words, he issued a decree: 'He still thinks as an enemy. [In his] wandering, he became a bandit. What has he come looking for? We measured those like him against a linchpin. What do you expect? Cast him from my sight!' [So] they executed him at once.

[157] In that same Year of the Dog when Chinggis Qahan went to fight the Tatar people, the Ong Qan went to fight the Merkits. He chased Toqto'a-beki towards the Barqujin lowland and killed Toqto'a's eldest son, Tögüs-beki. He took Toqto'a's two daughters, Qutuqtai and Cha'alun,[348] and his wives and plundered the two sons, Qutu and Chila'un, together with [Toqto'a-beki's] people. [Yet] he gave nothing to Chinggis Qahan.

[158] After that, Chinggis Qahan and the Ong Qan went to war against Buyiruq Qan of the Güchügüd Naimans, who was at Soqoq-usun[349] in the region of Uluq-taq. When they arrived, Buyiruq Qan, unable to join battle, fled from Soqoqusun across the Altai [Mountains]. They pursued

Buyiruq Qan across the Altai and down the Ürünggü [River][350] at Qum-shinggir.[351] During the pursuit, a lord named Yeditubluq[352] serving [Buyiruq Qan] as a scout, was chased by our scouts. As he escaped across the top of the mountain, his front saddle-strap broke and he was captured. After chasing Buyiruq Qan down the Ürünggü, [Chinggis Qahan and the Ong Qan] caught up with him at Lake Kishil-bashi and destroyed him.

[159] While Chinggis Qahan and the Ong Qan were returning, the warrior Kökse'ü-sabraq[353] oftheNaimans arrayed his army at the Bayidaraq Confluence and prepared to join battle with them. Chinggis Qahan and the Ong Qan agreed to fight and deployed their soldiers. [When] they arrived, however, it was too late [in the day]. 'Let us fight tomorrow,' they said, and spent the night lined up together. The Ong Qan had fires lit along his lines, [but] during the night he moved upstream along the Qara-se'ül.[354]

[160] Jamuqa left together with the Ong Qan. On the way, Jamuqa said to the Ong Qan: 'Some time ago, my sworn brother Temüjin had emissaries among the Naimans. Now, he has not come with us. Qan, Qan, I am a

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348 Cha'arun.

349 *Soqoq* meant '(bitter) cold' in the Orkhon Turkish dialect, while *usu* meant 'river' or 'water' in Mongolian. The Soqoq-usun River is located in the Ulaan-gom area of the western region of present-day Mongolia. For details, see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 239.

350 The Ürünggü flows from the western part of the Altai Mountains to the southern part of Khovd. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 132, and Li Zefen 1970, p. 109, n. 1.

351 'Sand Hills.'

352 Yedi-tubluq's name indicates that he was a man of high status. In the Orkhon Turkish dialect, *yedi* meant 'gentleman, lord, god', while *tubluq* meant 'landowner' or a man of good social background. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 309.

353 The name Kökse'ü-sabraq derives from the Mongolian *köki,* 'to stimulate', and the Orkhon Turkish *sabraq,* 'reckless, unstable'. For *köki,* see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 217.

lark that stays [with you], [while] my sworn brother is a distant lark.[355] Perhaps he is late [in coming with us] [because] he has gone to the Naimans and joined with them.' At these words of Jamuqa's, Gürin-ba'atur of the Ubchiqs said: 'Why is he flattering [the Ong Qan] like this, slandering and vilifying his own honest brothers?'

[161] Chinggis Qahan spent the night where he was, in preparation for the next day's battle. At daybreak, [he saw that] the Ong Qan's positions were deserted. They have made burnt offerings[356] of us,' he said. Chinggis Qahan moved across the Eder-Altai Confluence. He continued moving, and set up camp on the Sa'ari Steppe. From then on, Chinggis Qahan and Qasar, aware of the [military] situation of the Naimans, no longer regarded them as [worth fighting].[357]

[162] Pursuing the Ong Qan, Kökse'ü-sabraq plundered [his son] Senggüm and took Senggüm's wife and son, together with his people and his clan. He [also] plundered half of the Ong Qan's people, herds, and dairy products at the mouth of the Telegetü [Pass] and then returned. While this battle was in progress, the two sons of the Merkit Toqto'a, Qutu and Chila'un, who had been staying [at the mouth of the pass], took the opportunity to leave, taking their people [with them]. They moved off down along the Selengge and joined their father.

[163] After Köksegü-sabraq had plundered him, the Ong Qan sent an emissary to Chinggis Qahan. The emissary said: The Naimans have plundered my people, my clan, my

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354 'Black-tail River.'

355 Jamuqa refers to two different birds in this passage, both of them similar to larks. The first is *qayiruqana,* melanocorypha mongolica (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 176), the second *bildü'ür,* alauda alpestris or otocoris bonaparte.

356 *Tüleshilen,* translated here as 'burnt offerings', derives from *tüleshi,* 'firewood'. Tüleshi also denoted the burning of food, clothes, and silk as an offering to the dead. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 272.

357 Chinggis considered the Naimans a weak tribe, not worth fighting.

wife, and my sons. I beg you, [my] son, to send your four warhorses.[358] Save my people for me.' [This is the message that the Ong Qan] sent. Chinggis Qahan prepared his soldiers and sent them [together with] his four war-horses, Bo'orchu, Muqali, Boroqul,[359] and Chila'un-ba'atur. Just as the four war-horses were about to arrive, Senggüm—who had been fighting at Hula'an-qut—was on the point of being captured, his horse having been hit in the thigh by an arrow. [But] the four war-horses rescued him, and restored to him his people, clan, wives, and children. The Ong Qan said: 'In previous times, his good father restored my people to me after they had been completely scattered. Now, his son [Chinggis] has, by sending his four war-horses, again restored my scattered people to me. Let Heaven and Earth see that I repay my debt.'

[164] Again, the Ong Qan spoke: 'Once before, my sworn brother Yisügei-ba'atur restored my scattered people to me. [Now] Temüjin, my son, has again restored my scattered people to me. Father and son gathered together my scattered people and returned them to me. On whose behalf did they gather up and return [my people to me], and suffer in so doing? But now

I have grown old.
When, having aged,
I go up to the heights,[360]
when, becoming old,
I climb the rocky slopes,
who will rule my people?[361]

My younger brothers lack any moral character. Senggüm, my one and only son,[362] is as bad as no son. If I make [my] son Temüjin the elder brother of Senggüm, I will have two sons and be at ease.' [So] Chinggis Qahan met together

358 These 'war-horses' *(külüg)* are, of course, men. *Külüg* (or *külük*) meant 'a good horse, a hero, a large dog' in the Orkhon Turkish dialect. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 219.

359 Boroqul later became one of Chinggis Qan's four marshals.

with the Ong Qan in the Qara-tün of the Tu'ula [River] and they declared themselves to be father and son. The reason they declared themselves to be father and son was that [Temüjin's] father, Yisügei Qan, had long ago sworn brotherhood with the Ong Qan, so it was said that [the Ong Qan] was like a father [to Chinggis Qahan]. [For these] reasons, they declared themselves to be father and son. They [also] spoke of other things: 'When we are riding out against many enemies, let us ride out together with a single [goal]. When we are hunting wild beasts, let us hunt together with a single [aim].' Talking in this way, Chinggis Qahan and the Ong Qan said: 'They are jealous of the two of us.

Should we be stung
by the fangs of a snake,
let's not be bitten.
Let us understand one another
by teeth and by mouth,
let us trust one another.
Should we be slandered
by the back teeth of a snake,
let us reject its slander.
Let us understand one another
by mouth and by tongue,
let us trust one another.'

They pledged these words, and [so] they lived together in companionship.

[165] 'Over and above friendship, let there be double friendship,' said Chinggis Qahan, and he thought of asking

360 I.e., when my body is buried in the mountain tops.

361 The images that the Ong Qan uses are of dying (to go up to the heights, etc). The verbs that he uses to denote ageing *(qa'uchitba, qa'uchitchu)* are usually used of inanimate objects. Clearly, he already, indicating that he sees himself as a corpse.

362 Actually, the Ong Qan had at least two sons.

for Senggüm's younger sister, Cha'ur-beki,[363] [as a wife] for [his son] Jochi,[364] in exchange for which he would give our Qojin-beki to Senggüm's son Tusaqa. Senggüm, who thought highly of himself [and looked own on us], said: 'If [a girl of] our clan joins them, she will stand by the door-fire, looking [into the back of the tent] from the front. If a [girl of] his clan joins [us], she will sit in the back [of the tent] looking towards the door-fire.'[365] Thinking highly of himself, he looked down on us and said, 'We will not give Cha'ur-beki [to you].' He did not favour [the idea of such a marriage]. Chinggis Qahan was displeased with these words and was inwardly disappointed in the Ong Qan and Nilqa-senggüm.[366]

[166] Jamuqa sensed [Chinggis Qahan's] disappointment. In the spring of the Year of the Pig,[367] Jamuqa, Altan, and Quchar, [the people of the] Qardakids,

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363 Although Cha'ur was a proper name, *beki* meant 'lady, woman, girl' in the Orkhon Turkish dialect. During this period, the title *beki* was reserved for the daughters of Qans, although after the fifteenth century it was also used for the wives of the Qahans. (For further details, see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 311.) *Qojin* meant 'princess' in the Orkhon Turkish dialect. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 182.

364 Jochi was the eldest son of Chinggis Qahan, born in 1179 after the recapture of his mother, Lady Börte, from the Three Merkit (see Section 110). Jochi died in 1225, at the age of 47. (On his death, see Li Zefen 1970, p. 503, n. 1.)

365 Besides the central hearth-fire *(golumta)* of the Mongol yurt, another fire, called *ala'u* in the Orkhon Turkish dialect, was located just inside the door. It was this second fire to which Senggüm refers. When the subjects of the Qahan presented their tributes to him, a shaman had to pass the tributes across the *ala'u* to purify them of any evil spirits (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 91–92). Senggüm is implying that having accepted Chinggis Qahan as his eldest son, Ong Qan will enjoy a higher status than Senggüm. Thus a girl from Senggüm's clan would have low status in Chinggis Qahan's yurt. She would stand by the door looking in, rather than sit with the Qahan at the back of the yurt facing those who entered. The Ong Qan disinherited Senggüm by adopting Chinggis Qahan, so Senggüm was unlikely to be favourably disposed to Chinggis.

Ebügejins, and Noyakins, and Söge'etei, To'oril, and Qachi'un-beki united as one and went off [together]. They went to Nilqa-senggüm at Berke-elet on the northern side of the Jeje'er Heights. [There] Jamuqa uttered slanders [against Temüjin]: 'My sworn brother Temüjin [has] messengers and emissaries in [the camp of] Tayang Qan of the Naimans. His mouth says "father" and "son", [but] his heart [speaks] differently. Can you be [so] trusting? [Are you aware] what will happen to you if you do not attack him by surprise? If you ride out against [my] sworn brother Temüjin, I shall enter from the flank.' Altan and Quchar said: 'As for [these] sons of Mother Hö'elün, we will

kill the elder brother and
lay waste the younger brothers

for you. Ebügejin, Noyakin, and Qarta'at[368] [then] said: 'We will

seize his hands
and trip his feet

for you.' To'oril said: 'Let us find a way of taking Temüjin's people away from him. If his people are taken away, what can he do?' Qachi'un-beki said: 'Whatever you decide, Nilqa-senggüm [my] lord, I will accompany you to the furthest point, and to the very depths.'

[167] After these words had been spoken, Nilqa-senggüm, acting through Sayiqan-töde'en, informed his father, the Ong Qan, of the exchange. When told, the Ong Qan said: 'How can you think so about my son Temüjin? Until now, he has been our prop; if you ponder wickedness against

366 The epithet *nilqa* ('junior, tender, new-born') is added to Senggüm's name in the History to indicate his new junior status in relation to Chinggis. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 137.

367 1203.

him in this way, we shall be unloved by Heaven. Jamuqa has a prattling tongue. Are his words fit? Are his words proper?' [The Ong Qan] was displeased by [Sayiqan-töde'en's news], and sent him back. Again Senggüm sent word: '[I send] you men with [winning] tongues. Why do you not believe me?' Again and again he sent word. [Finally], tiring, he went in person to [the Ong Qan] and said: 'Even [now], when you are so much alive, [Temüjin] gives us no consideration whatsoever. Truly, Qan and father,

when you choke on the white,
when you gag on the black,[369]

will he let us rule the people that your father, Qurchaqusbuyiruq Qan, toiled [so hard] to bring together? Who will he let rule them?' The Ong Qan replied: 'How can I forsake my child, my son? Until now, he has been our prop. Is it right to ponder wickedness [against him]? We shall be unloved by Heaven.' On [hearing] these words, his son Nilqa-senggüm grew angry and, throwing aside the felt-door, went out. But the Ong Qan, who loved his son Senggüm, called [him] back. [The Ong Qan] said: 'Heaven will not love us. How can you ask me to forsake my son [Temüjin]? [But] you will do what you can, and you are in charge.'

[168] Senggüm said: 'They recently asked us [to give them] Cha'ur-beki. Now they will come for the sheep-neck[370] feast.[371] Let us therefore fix a day, invite them, and then capture them.'[372] Everyone agreed [to this plan]. They

368 Qardakid.

369 The 'white' refers to milk and to liquids generally, the 'black' to meat and solids. Senggüm wants to know whether his father thinks that Chinggis will leave the Ong Qan's people in peace after the Ong Qan has become old and feeble, so old and feeble that his food chokes him. Some Mongol scholars have suggested that *sacha'as,* 'if you choke', and *qaqahu,* 'if you gag', also meant 'die' in old Mongolian.

sent word [to Chinggis Qahan]: 'We will give [you] Cha'ur-beki. Come to the betrothal feast.' [So] Chinggis Qahan, having been summoned, arrived in the company of ten men. On the way, [however], while he was spending the night in Father Mönglik's yurt, Father Mönglik said [to him]: 'When we [first] asked for Cha'ur-beki, these same [people] looked down on us and refused to give [her]. Why, for no apparent reason, have they now summoned you to the betrothal feast? These people think highly of themselves, [so] why do they summon you, saying, for no apparent reason, that they wish to give [the girl]? Is what they think fit and proper? [My] son, consider your movements [carefully]. Send them an excuse. Say that spring is coming, that our [horse] herds are getting thin, that we must feed our herds.' Chinggis Qahan did not go to the betrothal feast but sent Buqatai and Kiratal [instead], and told them to eat. He [then] returned from Father Mönglik's yurt. Upon Buqatai and Kiratai's arrival, [Senggüm and the others] said to one another: 'We have been discovered. Early tomorrow we will surround and capture them.'

[169] So they discussed surrounding and capturing them and agreed to do so. When Altan's younger brother, Yeke-cheren, returned to his yurt, he said: 'We have decided to capture Temüjin early tomorrow. If someone were to take this news to Temüjin, with what would the messenger be rewarded?' His wife Alaq-it[373] replied: 'What will become of your foolish words? I fear that people will take them to be true.' While they were talking in this way, [Yeke-cheren's] herdsman, Badai, came to deliver the milk. He [over]heard their conversation and went away again. Badai approached his companion, the herdsman Kishiliq, and told him what he had heard. Kishiliq said: 'I shall go myself to find out [if

370 I.e., betrothal.

371 The 'sheep-neck feast' *(bu'uljar)* was so called because it was hoped that the ensuing marriage should be as tough as a sheep's neck. See Jagchid-Sechin 1979, p. 214, n. 1.

372 Senggüm said these words in 1203.

what you say is true].' He went to the yurt outside [which] [Yeke-Jcheren's son Narin-ke'en sat sharpening his arrows. [Narin-ke'en] said: '[Do you recall] what we said just a moment ago? Our tongues should be stilled, [for] whose mouth can we stop [from speaking of sending news to Chinggis]?' After this [short] speech, Narin-ke'en told his herdsman Kishiliq: 'Catch the white Merkit horse and the bay with the white muzzle. Tether them [and hold them] ready. Early tomorrow morning, [at about two o'clock], we will ride out [to attack].' Kishiliq went to Badai and said: 'I have checked your message. It is true. We two [must] take the news to Temüjin.' After agreeing [to the plan], they captured the white Merkit [horse] and the bay with the white muzzle, came [back], and tethered them ready. Late that same night they killed one of their lambs in their travelling-tent and cooked it [with wood broken] from the bed. [After that], they rode off in the night on the white Merkit [horse] and the bay with the white muzzle that were tethered ready. They arrived at Chinggis Qahan['s camp] the [same] night. From the back of the yurt,[374] Badai and Kishiliq told him what Yeke-cheren had said and what his son, Narin-ke'en, had said while he sat sharpening his arrows—[how] [Narin-ke'en] had told them to capture the white Merkit [horse] and the bay with the white muzzle and to tether them ready. Badai and Kishiliq added: 'If Chinggis Qahan favours us, he will not doubt [our word]; they have agreed [on a plan] to surround and capture [you].'

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373 Although a proper name, Alaq-it is a compound of the Mongol *alaq,* 'spotted', and the Orkhon Turkish it, 'dog'.

374 For this practice of reporting from the back of the yurt, see Sections 229 and 278. Chinggis Qahan would have been at the back of the yurt (on the inside), separated from Badai and Kishiliq by no more than a thin felt wall. However, he would retain a degree of security and privacy. In Mongolia today people still talk through the walls of the yurt. For example, boys talk to girls in this way.



CHAPTER SIX

[170] After hearing Badai and Kishiliq, Chinggis Qahan believed them. That same night, he passed on the information to those at his side whom he trusted. To lighten themselves, they shed their belongings and retreated that same night. They passed by the northern side of the Mau[375] Heights,[376] where [Chinggis Qahan] left Jelme-go'a of the Uriangqad, whom he trusted, to act as rearguard. [Then] he posted scouts and moved on. [He and the others] continued on their journey. The next day, at Qalaqaljit Sands, they stopped to rest and eat [from] noontime [until] the sun [began] to set.[377] While they were resting, Alchidai told the herders Chigidei and Yadir to take his geldings to new pastures. As they herded the geldings, [Chigidei and Yadir] saw the dust of the enemy approaching by way of Hula'an-buruqat on the southern side of the Mau Heights. The enemy is drawing near,'[378] they said, and drove [back] the geldings. [Chinggis Qahan], told that the enemy were on their way, watched them raising the dust [as] they travelled through Hula'anburuqat[379] on the southern side of the Mau Heights. He said: 'That is the Ong Qan coming after [us].'

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375 'Evil.'

376 This mountain lies between the Qalqa and Nömörge Rivers. For details, see Eldengtei and Ardajab 1986, p. 495, n. 6.

377 I.e., at about 3.00 pm. *Kebeli'ürün,* the word used, derives from *kebeli* or *kelbei,* 'awry, slanting'. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 210.

After seeing the dust, Chinggis Qahan had the geldings brought in and loaded up. [Then] [he and his men] rode off. Had [the herdsmen] failed to spot [the enemy], they would have been taken by surprise. While this was happening, Jamuqa was drawing near in the company of the Ong Qan. The Ong Qan asked Jamuqa: 'Who are likely to fight [alongside] [my] son Temüjin?' Jamuqa said: 'He has with him those people known as the Uru'uts and Mangquts. They will surely fight, [for]

every time they turn around,
their battle order matches.
Every time they turn about,
their skill matches.

From childhood, they are used to swords and spears, and to white and multi-coloured banners. They are inferior[380] people.' The Ong Qan replied: 'If so, we must send Qadag, the Jirgin warrior, to meet them. The Jirgin warriors shall attack, followed by Achiq-shirun[381] of the Tümen-Tübegens, as their rearguard. [The Olon-dongqayit warriors shall attack as the Tübegens' rearguard.[382]] Let Qori-shilemün-taishi, commanding the thousand Torqods[383] of the Ong Qan, attack as rearguard of the Dongqayits. We, the main core of the army, will then attack, as rearguard of the thousand Torqods.' Again, the Ong Qan said: 'Younger brother Jamuqa, array our

378 The Ong Qan would have travelled some thirty miles. For details, see Li Zefen 1970, pp. 124–125; for a map, see *ibid,* p. 120.

379 'Red Bushes' or 'Red Willows'.

380 In the text, the word is transcribed as *serelten,* 'those to be wary of'. However, it should actually read *saraltan,* 'lower-class people'. For details, see Choiji 1984, p. 270, n. 23. See also Nei Menggu daxue Menggu yuwen yanjiushi 1976–1977 p. 867.

381 Achiq-shirun is a proper name. In Orkhon Turkish, however, *achiq meant* 'full of anger', while shirün in Mongol meant 'stern', 'violent'. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 97.

soldiers.' Hearing these words, Jamuqa, who was standing to one side, went up to his companions and said: 'The Ong Qan has told me to array [his] soldiers. I could never defeat my sworn brother, yet the Ong Qan tells me to array these soldiers, [for] he is less capable than I.[384] As a companion, his qualities are limited. Let me send a message to [my] sworn brother telling [him] to stand fast.' Jamuqa secretly sent a message to Chinggis Qahan, in which he said: 'The Ong Qan has asked me: "Who is most likely to fight alongside my son Temüjin?" I replied: "In my opinion, the Uru'uts and the Mangquts." In response, they positioned their own Jirgins in the vanguard and ordered Achiq-shirun of the Tümen-Tübegens [to serve as] the Jirgins' rearguard. They chose the Olon-dongqayits as the Tübegens' rearguard and the Ong Qan's thousand Torqods, [commanded by] Lord Qori-shilemün, as the Dongqayits' rearguard. They decided to deploy the Ong Qan's main force as [Qori-shilemün's] rearguard. The Ong Qan then said: "'Younger brother Jamuqa, array these soldiers." He added that he relied on me. I realised that his qualities were limited. How can I array his soldiers? I will never fight against my sworn brother. [But] the Ong Qan is less capable than I. Do not fear, [my sworn] brother. Stand firm.'

[171] On receiving this message, Chinggis Qahan said: 'What do you say, Uncle Jürchedei of the Uru'uts? I shall appoint you as the vanguard.' Before Jürchedei could utter a sound, Quyildar-sechen of the Mangquts said: 'I wish to fight in front of [my] sworn brother. I entrust to [my] sworn brother the subsequent care of my orphaned children.' Jürchedei said: 'We Uru'uts and Mangquts wish to fight as Chinggis Qahan's vanguard.' So saying, Jürchedei and Quyildar arrayed their own Uru'ut and Mangqut [soldiers]

382 Restored from Choiji 1984, p. 267.

383 Turqaq. For Torqods or Turquds, p. 126, n. 333.

384 I.e., in Jamuqa's opinion, the Ong Qan is less capable of commanding soldiers than Jamuqa himself.

in front of Chinggis Qahan. As soon as they had lined up, the enemy's Jirgin vanguard arrived and drew near. The Uru'uts and Mangquts counterattacked, crushing the Jirgins. While they were crushing the Jirgins [in this way], Achiq-shirun of the Tümen-tübegens attacked them. Achiq-shirun pierced Quyildar and brought him off his horse. The Mangquts turned back and [stood] over Quyildar. Jürchedei attacked with his Uru'ut [soldiers] and crushed the Tümen-tübegens. While this was going on, the Olon-dongqayits turned up and counterattacked, [but] Jürchedei crushed the Dongqayits, too. While he was doing so, Qori-shilemün-taisai attacked with the one thousand Torqods. Again, Jürchedei forced Qori-shilemün-taisai back and crushed him. As Jürchedei moved forwards, Senggüm, without consulting the Ong Qan, began to counterattack, [but] was shot in the cheek[385] by an arrow and fell on the spot. [Because] Senggüm had fallen, the Kereyits turned back and stood over him. [So we] crushed them. As the setting sun touched the top of the low hills, our [soldiers] turned back. They returned with Quyildar, who had fallen wounded. Chinggis Qahan and our [soldiers] left the Ong Qan on the field of battle and moved away to pass the night in another place.

[172] They passed the night standing [at the ready]. When they called the roll at daybreak, however, they [found] that Öködei,[386] Boroqul, and Bo'orchu were missing. Chinggis Qahan said: 'Both Bo'orchu and Boroqul, whom I trust, have stayed behind with Öködei. Living or dying, how can they leave one another?' During the night, our [soldiers] readied the geldings. Chinggis Qahan said: 'If they pursue us, we shall fight.' After this order, the [soldiers] stood [ready]. When day broke, we saw

385 The Chinese interlinear note has 'red cheek' instead of 'cheek'. In Mongol, the compound *enggesge qachar* meant 'cheek'. For the Chinese, however, rosy cheeks were a distinguishing feature of the Mongols. Today, *enggesge* means 'rouge'; some have tried to claim that Senggüm (and men generally at this period) wore rouge, but there is no evidence to support this claim.

a man approaching from the rear. It [turned out] to be Bo'orchu. Chinggis Qahan said: 'Let Eternal Heaven oversee [our destiny],' and beat his breast. Bo'orchu said: 'While we were attacking, my horse fell, shot by an arrow, [so] I started to run. As I was running, the Kereyits turned back and stood around Senggüm. In the confusion of the battle, I [found] a laden horse. The load had slipped. The [horse] was [just] standing there. Cutting away its load, I mounted the pack saddle and set off. I tracked our [soldiers'] route from [the battlefield]. Here I am.'

[173] Not long afterwards, another man approached. As he drew near, a pair of feet [seemed] to dangle beneath him. [Yet] they could see only one person. When the man finally arrived, [it turned out to be] Boroqul, with Öködei riding behind him. Blood was trickling from the corners of his mouth. Öködei had been hit in the neck by an arrow. Boroqul had sucked away the congealed blood, which trickled from the corners of his mouth [as] he rode along. On seeing them, tears ran down Chinggis Qahan's face and his heart ached. He quickly had a fire kindled and cauterised [the wound]. [Then] he had got someone to bring Öködei a drink and gave it to him. 'If the enemy comes, we will fight,' he said. Boroqul said: The dust[-trail] of the enemy is over there, [heading] in the direction of Hula'an-buruqat, by the southern side of the Mau Heights. The dust is rising in a long [trail].' [Chinggis Qahan] told Boroqul: 'If they come, we will fight; if they drive us back, we will array our soldiers and fight.' After he had spoken these words, they moved out. They continued up the Ulqui-shilügeljit [until] they reached Dalan-nemürges.

[174] Qada'an-daldurqan then left his wife and children and came [to Chinggis Qahan]. Qada'an-daldurqan told [Chinggis Qahan] what the Ong Qan had said. The Ong Qan's son Senggüm had fallen, shot in the cheek by an *uchuma*[387] *arrow, so they turnedback* and [stood] around him. Then [the Ong Qan] said:

386 Ögödei.

'Should you have stirred those [things]
that you stirred?
Should you have touched those [things]
that you touched?
Alas, they have caused a nail
to be driven into my son's cheek.[388]

My son's life is [in danger]—let us attack.' Achiq-shirun replied: 'Qan, Qan, do not act in such a way. When we were seeking the hidden son[389] [yet] to be [born], we made magic flags and said: *"Abui," "babui."*[390] *Soweprayed*, searching for him. Let us take care of Senggüm, the son who was born [as a result]. Most of the Mongqols, [including] Jamuqa, Altan, and Quchar, are in our [camp]. Where can the Mongqols who rebelled against us and went with Temüjin go? They have become

riders with [nothing but] horses,
shelterers with [nothing but] trees.

If they fail to return, we will go to fetch them. We put them like dried horse-dung in our gathered skirts.' The Ong Qan replied to Achiq-shirun: 'You are right. My son must not

387 An *uchuma* arrow, also known as an *aqjim,* had a round tip and a short shaft; it contained no iron or steel. See Choiji 1984, p. 277, n. 3.

388 The poem implies that trouble has been needlessly caused.

389 I.e, Senggüm.

390 The Ong Qan desired a son and resorted to magic to obtain one. We do not know exactly what was done with the magic flags. However, in one shamanistic ceremony designed to bring good fortune or avert calamity, a rope was tied between two trees and twenty strips of cloth were attached to it, each painted with the image of a cow or some other domesticated animal. (See Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 291–292). *Abui* and *babui,* the informal address of parents, also meant 'dearest', their most likely meaning in the context, since they were apparently addressed to the longed-for son. (For further details, see Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 88–89.)

suffer. Look after my son and see that he is not shaken [as we travel].' He [then] returned from the place of battle.' Thus spoke Qada'an-daldurqan.

[175] Chinggis Qahan then moved downstream along the Qalqa from Dalan-nemürges, and counted his [soldiers]. They numbered two thousand six hundred. Chinggis Qahan set off with one thousand three hundred of them along the Qalqa's western bank. [The other] one thousand three hundred men set off along the Qalqa's eastern bank, [led by] the Uru'uts and the Mangquts. They hunted for provisions along the way. Quyildar's wound had not yet healed, but still he joined in chasing after the wild beasts, despite Chinggis Qahan's warning. [As a result], [his wounds] reopened and he died. Chinggis Qahan [buried] him on the Keltegei[391] Cliffs at Ör-nu'u[392] on the Qalqa.

[176] Knowing that Terge, Emel,[393] and other members of the Onggirat [tribe] were camped at the mouth the Qalqa on Lake Buyur, Chinggis Qahan sent Jürchedei and his Uru'ut [soldiers] to visit [them]. 'From early days,' he said, 'the Onggirat people [have relied]

on the complexions of their sisters' daughters,
on the colour of their daughters' [cheeks].[394]

If this is [true], they will submit [to us]. If they say that they are against us, we will fight them.' He sent Jürchedei on his way, and the [Onggirats] submitted to him. [Because] they had submitted, Chinggis Qahan did not touch their belongings.

[177] Having caused the Onggirats to submit to him, Chinggis Qahan set up camp on the eastern [side] of the Tüngge Stream. He gave Arqai-qasar and Sügegei-je'ün the

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391 Tilted.'

392 Ör-nu'u meant 'central curved shore' (or, 'pit of the stomach, the heart'; *nu'u,* 'a dry bank left by the curve of a river'). Ör-nu'u was on the west bank of the Khalkh (Qalqa) River. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 127.

393 Amel.

following message: 'Tell the Qan my father: "I have set up camp on the eastern [side] of the Tüngge Stream. The grass is good. Our geldings are growing strong."' And [Chinggis Qahan] continued: 'Qan my father, what grievance causes you to reprimand[395] me? If you [wish] to reprimand us, why did you not wait until your humble son and humble daughter-in-law had slept? We are living here in peace, [yet] you make our bed lower, you disrupt the upward [flow] of the smoke [from the hearth-fire]. Why do you reprimand us in this way?[396] Qan my father,

you have been pricked
by a man on the side.
You have been provoked
by an outsider cutting across.

What did we agree, Qan [my] father? At Hula'anu'utbolda'ut, by Jorqal-qun, did we not tell each other [that]

should we be stung
by the fangs of a snake,
let's not be bitten.
Let us understand one another
by teeth and by mouth,
let us trust one another.

Was that not our agreement? Now, Qan my father, have you left, although we understood each other by mouth and tongue?

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394 See Sections 64 and 65.

395 Literally, 'teach'.

396 Chinggis Qahan rebukes the Ong Qan for the manner of his reprimand. Unaware of the cause of the Ong Qan's grievance, he declares that the matter should have been settled amicably, for example, after a good night's sleep. 'To make the bed lower' meant to diminish a person's social status. The hearth-fire stands for the family; the smoke rising from it, for the family's security and continuity.

Should we be slandered
by the back teeth of a snake,
let us reject its slander.
Let us understand one another
by mouth and by tongue,
let us trust one another.

Was that not our agreement? Now, Qan my father, that you have left, do we not understood each other by teeth and mouth? Although my men are few, [they were not so few as] to cause me to ask for more. Although I am poor, [I am not so poor] that I need to ask [someone] to get me [another with] greater qualities. If the second shaft on a two-shaft cart[397] breaks, the ox can no longer pull the cart. Was I not your second shaft? If the second wheel on a two-wheeled cart breaks, the cart can no longer move. Was I not your second wheel? Talking of earlier days, after your father, Qurchaqus-buyiruq Qan, said that you were the eldest of his forty sons, they made you Qan. [Yet] after becoming Qan, you killed your younger brothers Tai-temür-taishi and Buqa-temür. At the time of the killing, your younger brother Erke-qara escaped [with] his life and submitted to Inancha-bilge of the Naimans. Your uncle, Gür Qan, said that you had become the killer of your younger brothers and rode out against you, [but] you escaped [with] your life and retreated down the Selengge [River] [with] one hundred men. To avoid [them], you [and your men] slipped into the Qara'un Pass. You left there and gave your daughter Huja'ur-üjin to Toqto'a of the Merkits, to ingratiate yourself with him.[398] You said: 'Rescue my people for me from my uncle, Gür Qan, Yisügei Qan my

397 *Kilügü* meant 'cart-shaft' in thirteenth-century Mongolian, but it also meant 'crosswise beam', the equivalent of present-day *ila'u*. After the thirteenth century, the word aral (which also means 'island') was used for 'cart-shaft'. (See Eldengtei et al. 1991, p. 449.) In the Dawr Mongol region, *kilügü* or *ila'u* is represented by the word *ada'ar*.

father.' [Yisügei Qan] wished, in response to your request, to rescue your people for you. He arrayed his soldiers and led Qunan and Baqaji from the Tayichi'uts in order to [do so]. He pursued Gür Qan, who was at Qurban-telesüt[399] with twenty or thirty people, towards Qashin and rescued your people for you. After arriving in the Qara-tün on the Tu'ula [River], you, Qan my father, became the sworn brother of Yisügei Qan. Thanking [my father], you said: 'I shall repay this favour to your children's children. Let the protection of Heaven above and of the Earth decide [our destiny].' Such were your words, such were your [feelings] of gratitude. Erge-qara then requested soldiers from Inancha-bilge of the Naimans and rode out against you. You escaped [with] your life, but abandoned your people. You fled in the company of [just a] few men to Gür Qan of the Qara-kidats[400] on the Chui River in the Sarta'ul lands. Yet within a year, you had rebelled against Gür Qan and left. You travelled through the lands of the Uiquts and the Tangquts and suffered hardship. You ate by milking your five goats, tethered in a line, and by letting the blood of your camels. You came [to me] with nothing but a blind, black-maned, black-tailed yellow horse. Qan my father, when you came to me, suffering such hardship, I recalled that you and Yisügei Qan my father had sworn brotherhood. On account of this recollection, I sent Taqai and Sükegei as emissaries to meet you. I myself went from Bürgi Bank on the Kelüren to welcome you. We met at Lake Güse'ür. Aware that you were suffering, I raised levies for you. Was it not because you had sworn brotherhood with my father that we agreed to become father and son in the Qara-tün on the Tu'ula? That winter, I brought you

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398 Literally,'…gave your daughter…as a "face"' *(ni'urqan).* Some, however, translate this term as 'to gain prestige'.

399 'Three Grasses.' *Telesü* or *derestü,* here part of a place name, is broom or feather grass, i.e., lasiagrostis splendens. It reappears as the plant in Section 249. (See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 261.)

400 Qara-kitad.

into my camp and supported you. Winter and summer passed, and in the autumn, I rode out against Toqto'a-beki of the Merkit people and fought him at Mürüche-se'ül by Qadiqliq-niru'un.[401] I pursued Toqto'a-beki towards the Barqujin lowlands and plundered the Merkit people. I took their many herds, their palace yurts, and their grain and gave it all to you, Qan [my] father. I did not allow you to go hungry for even half a day, I did not allow you to become thin in even half a month. We drove Buyiruq Qan of the Göchügürs[402] across the Altai from the Soqoq-usun [River] at Uluq-taq. We pursued him down the Ürünggü and, after reaching Lake Kichil-bash, finished him off. As we returned, Kökse'ü-sabraq of the Naimans drew up his soldiers at Baidaraq-belchir. But when we arrayed [our soldiers] for battle, it was [already] late in the evening. We [therefore] said: 'Let us fight tomorrow morning.' While we were passing the night in battle [formation], you, Qan my father, had fires burned at your [battle] stations and moved up along the Qara-se'ül [River] in the night. When we looked the next morning, you were no longer at your station. You had moved away. "They have made burnt offerings of us," I said, and I too left. Crossing the Eder-Altai Confluence, I pitched camp on the Sa'ari Steppe. Kökse'ü-sabraq then chased you and took Senggüm's wife, children, people, and clan. He [also] plundered half your people, your herds, and your provisions at Telegetü Pass. Qudu and Chila'un, the sons of Toqto'a the Merkit, were there with you, together with their people and their clan, [but] during the fighting they turned their backs on you and went to join their father at Barqujin. Then, Qan my father, you sent [me the following message]: "My people and clan have been plundered by Kökse'ü-sabraq of the Naimans. [My] son, send for me your four war horses." Because I do not think [as] you, I sent [you] my four war

401 'Stronghold Ridge.' (See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 175.)

402 The Göchügürs were a sub-tribe of the Naimans. (See Irenchin 1984, p. 155, n. 3.)

horses—Bo'orchu, Muqali, Boroqul, and Chila'un-ba'atur—and arrayed my soldiers. Before my four war horses arrived, Senggüm had been engaged in fighting at Hula'an-qut. His horse had been shot in the flank by an arrow and he was [on the point of] being captured. At that very moment, my four war horses arrived. After rescuing Senggüm, they rescued [your] wife and sons, your people and your clan. When they returned them to you, Qan my father, you gratefully responded: "By sending his four war horses, my son Temüjin has saved my scattered people for me." Now, Qan my father, on what grounds do you reprimand me? [I request you to] send me emissaries [in order to explain] the reason for this reprimand. Send Qulbari-quri and Idürgen, [or at least] the latter.'

[178] The Ong Qan responded: 'Oh my poor and stupid son. Am I to part [from him]? [Then] I shall part from the principle. Am I to part [from him]? [Then] I shall part from [my] task.'[403] With an aching heart, he said: 'If, when I see my son, I think badly [of him], let my blood flow thus.' With this oath, he pierced the inside of his little finger with his arrow-trimming knife and let the blood flow into a small birch-bark container.[404] 'Give [this container] to my son,' he said, and sent it off.

[179] Chinggis Qahan also sent [a messenger] to tell [his] sworn brother Jamuqa: '[Since] you are tired of seeing me with my father the Qan, you have caused a rift between me and him. In the past, the first [of us] to rise used to drink from our father the Qan's blue cup.[405] [When] I rose first and drank the cup, you became jealous. Now you can empty the blue cup of [my] father, the Qan. Let us see how much you can consume.' Chinggis Qahan then sent [someone] to tell Altan and Quchar: 'You have forsaken

403 The 'principle' is loyalty: the 'task' is building up the Mongol empire, on which he and Chinggis Qahan were embarked.

404 Birch-bark containers *(daqtai)* were filled with dairy products and used as offerings in shamanistic ceremonies (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 275). By pouring his blood into one, the Ong Qan swears loyalty.

me. Did you intend to abandon me openly, or in secret? Quchar, when I said that you, as the recognised son of Nekün-taishi, should become Qan, you were not willing. Altan, when I said that you should become Qan and govern as your father, Qutula Qan, governed, you too were unwilling [to do as I proposed]. When I said: 'Sacha and Taichu, because you are [a generation] above us, and the sons of Bartan-ba'atur,[406] you should become Qans,' I was unable to [persuade them]. I said that all of you should become Qans [but] I was unable to [persuade you]. [Then] you said [to me]: 'You become Qan.' So I did as told, and governed. Had you become Qans, I would have ridden out as a scout against [your] many enemies. If Heaven had protected me, I would have plundered the enemy.

I would have brought
maidens, ladies, and women
with comely cheeks
and geldings with fine rumps.
I would have rounded up for you
the wily beasts,
the beasts of the rocks,
squeezing their forelegs together,
the beasts of the cliff-foot,
squeezing their thighs together,
and the beasts of the steppe,
squeezing their bellies together.

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405 It is not clear what this cup *(chung)* was made of, though it was clearly used for drinking. In the Orkhon Turkish dialect, *chung* was a large wooden vessel. For feasts, however, the Mongol nobles used containers or cups of leather, clay and, wood, and they drank alcohol from gold or silver cups. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 318. Whatever the case, Chinggis Qahan implies that to drink from the Ong Qan's cup is a privilege.

406 Actually, they were the sons of Ökin-barqaq. See Eldengtei and Ardajab 1986, p. 114, chart.

[This] I would have done for you.

Now be good companions to the Qan my father. Will it be said that you easily tire [of people]? Do not let it be said of you that you are [what you are] only with the support of the Cha'ut-quri.[407] And let no one set up camp at the source of the Three Rivers.'[408]

[180] Chinggis Qahan also [sent] [someone] to tell younger brother To'oril: The reason I call you "younger brother" [is as follows:] Tumbinai and Charaqai-lingqu brought a slave, Oqda, that they had captured.[409] The slave Oqda's son was the slave Sübegei; the slave Sübegei's son was Kököchü-kirsa'an; Kököchü-kirsa'an's son was Yegei-qongtaqar. You, To'oril, are the son of Yegei-qongtaqar. You go around flattering [the Ong Qan], [but] whose peoples do you say that you will give [to him]? My people, and Altan and Quchar, will be governed by no one. The reason I call you "younger brother" [is that you are]

my great-great-grandfather's
threshold slave,
and my great-grandfather's
personal slave of the door.

Such is my message to you.'

[181] Chinggis Qahan also [sent] [someone] to tell his sworn brother Senggüm: 'I was the son born with clothes, [410] you were the son born naked, [yet] our father the Qan

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407 I.e., of Chinggis Qahan. It is unclear why Chinggis should refer to himself at this point as the Cha'ut-quri (i.e., Ja'ut-quri), a title bestowed on him in Section 134. Perhaps his use of the title is ironic, given that he is objecting to the way in which Altan and Quchar use his name (by claiming his support for their project).

408 The three rivers are the Kelüren, the Tu'ula, and the Onon.

409 For Tumbinai and Charaqai-lingqu, see Sections 47 and 48.

cared for us both equally. [But] you, my sworn brother Senggüm, were jealous of me and [feared] that I would come between [you and the Ong Qan], [so] you drove me out. Do not worry the heart of our father the Qan; in the evening and in the morning, as you go out and you come in, continue to comfort him. You have not given up your old ambition while the Qan [our] father still lives, you intend to become Qan. You cause sorrow to our father the Qan. Do not pain him. Send emissaries to me, [my] sworn brother Senggüm, [and let them be] the companions Bilge-beki and Tödö'en.' And he sent [a further message:] 'When you send [your] emissaries to me, let the Qan [our] father send two and [you], sworn brother Senggüm, [another] two. [My] sworn brother Jamuqa should also send two emissaries, as should Altan, Quchar, Achig-shirun, and Qachi'un.' He got Arqaiqasar and Sügegei-je'ün to take this message. On hearing it, Senggüm said: 'When did he [ever] say "Qan the father"? Would he not [call him instead] "the old slaughterer"? And when did he [ever] call me his "sworn brother"? Did he not say that [I] always stick to the tail of "Toqto'a the Shaman's Sartaqchin sheep"?[411] I understand the tricks that his words perform—[they] are the first words of war. Bilge-beki and Tödö'en, hoist the battle standard, fatten the geldings. Lose no time.' Arqai-qasar then returned [to Chinggis Qahan] from the Ong Qan, [but] Sügegei-je'ün stayed behind [rather then join] Arqai, for his wife and children were with To'oril and he was afraid to leave. When Arqai arrived, he repeated [Senggüm's] words to Chinggis Qahan.

[182] Soon afterwards, Chinggis Qahan left and set up camp at Lake Baljuna.[412] While pitching camp, he met the Qorulas of Cho'os-chaqan, who submitted [to him] without fighting. The Sartaq[413] Asan, [sent by] Ala-qush-digit-quri,

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410 Chinggis was an adopted child.

411 This passage means that Senggüm wishes to take over the position of the Ong Qan, his father—a shameless ambition, and one quite beyond his capabilities. See also Cleaves 1982, p. 110, n. 51.

[leader] of the Önggüts,[414] came [on] a white camel, driving a thousand wethers downstream along the Ergüne River, to buy sable and squirrel [skins]. When he arrived at [Lake] Baljuna to water [his animals], he met [Chinggis Qahan].

[183] While Chinggis Qahan was watering [his animals] at the same [place] on [Lake] Baljuna, Qasar abandoned his wife and children and his three sons—Yegü, Yisüngge, and Tuqu—to the Ong Qan and left with a handful of his companions to seek out his elder brother, Chinggis Qahan. He climbed the ridges of Qara'un-jidün. [At first,] however, he failed to find him. He suffered great hardship, eating hide and sinews, [but] he persevered and [eventually] joined Chinggis Qahan at Baljuna. Chinggis Qahan rejoiced at Qasar's arrival and decided to send emissaries to the Ong Qan. After consulting with [Qasar], he sent word through Qali'udar of the Jewürets and Chaqurqan of the Uriangqai. He told [the two men] to repeat these words of Qasar to the Qan his father: 'I sought my elder brother, [but] he had disappeared; I searched for his tracks, [but] failed to find them. I shouted, [but] my voice could not be heard. I lie gazing at the stars, a lump of earth for my pillow. My wife and children are with my father the Qan. If [you] send my trusted man to me, I will go [to] the Qan [my] father.' [Chinggis Qahan told Qali'udar and Chaqurqan]: Tell him that [Qasar] sent this [message] and that he also says: "All of us should move at once. Let us agree [to meet] at Arqal-geügi on the Kelüren [River]. You must be there."'

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412 Lake Baljuna is near the Xalqa River, longitude 119, latitude 48. See Eldengtei and Ardajab 1986, pp. 545–546, n. 1.

413 I.e., Muslim.

414 Alaqush-digit-quri was the leader of the Önggüt tribe. His name derives from *alagushi,* an Orkhon Turkish word meaning a magpie or bird of many colours. His title derives from *digit,* 'friend, comrade', and *quri,* an Orkhon Turkish word meaning 'chief of several tribes'. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 93. The name Önggüt meant 'antithesis', 'opposite', 'disgusting' in Orkhon Turkish. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 124–125.

They agreed upon this [meeting] and sent Qali'udar and Chaqurqan [with the message]. Chinggis Qahan sent Jürchedei and Arqai [ahead] as scouts; he [himself] immediately departed. He rode out [with his soldiers] and arrived at Arqal-geügi on the Kelüren.

[184] After reaching the Ong Qan, Qali'udar and Chaqurqan told him that they had a message from Qasar, and repeated the words that they had heard [at Baljuna]. Having erected [his] gold-coloured tent,[415] the Ong Qan was feasting unconcernedly. In reply to Qali'udar and Chaqurqan's, he said: 'If that is so, let Qasar come.' He also said: 'We will send Itürgen, whom [Qasar] trusts.' And [so] he sent him. Immediately upon reaching Arqal-geügi, the agreed place, Itürgen saw a great [army], so he turned and fled. Qali'udar's horse was swift and caught him up. [But Qali'udar] was afraid to seize [Itürgen] and instead stopped him by cutting [first] in front of him and [then] behind him. Chaqurqan's horse was slow, but he shot from behind, at the [furthest] point of an arrow's flight, in the direction of Itürgen's black gelding [with] the golden saddle and [hit] it in the rump, [thus] bringing it down. Having captured Itürgen, Qali'udar and Chaqurqan took him to Chinggis Qahan. Chinggis Qahan did not speak with Itürgen [but simply] said: 'Take him to Qasar. Let Qasar decide [his fate].' They took Itürgen to Qasar. Qasar did not talk with Itürgen [either, but] cut him down on the spot and cast [his body] aside.

[185] Qali'udar and Chaqurqan said to Chinggis Qahan: 'The Ong Qan was unconcerned. He had put up a golden yurt and was feasting. Let us quickly change [our horses], travel through the night, take them by surprise, and surround them.' [Chinggis Qahan] approved their plan and sent Jürchedei and Arqai [ahead] as scouts. They travelled through the night until they reached the Jer-qabchiqay

415 In *altan terme,* 'a gold-coloured latticed yurt', *terme* means lattice. The word *terme* was specific to the Khökh Nu'ur and Ejine areas. (For details, see Mansang 1985, pp. 200–202, n. 37, and Eldengtei and Ardajab 1986, pp. 553–554, n. 1.)

Pass in the Jeje'er Heights, where they surrounded [the Ong Qan's camp]. They fought for three days and three nights, putting [the camp] under siege. By the time that they lined up to fight on the third day, [the Ong Qan's men] were tired and surrendered. The Ong Qan and Senggüm [managed] to escape at night. (It is not known how.[416]) Among the fighters was the Jirgin Qadaq-ba'atur. Qadaq-ba'atur came to surrender, with these words: 'We fought for three days and three nights. I thought to myself: "How can I let my rightful Qan be captured and killed?" Unable to forsake him, I battled on for a long time so that he could save himself and escape. If you now kill me, I accept my death. However, if Chinggis Qahan [decides] to show me favour, I will serve him.' Chinggis Qahan approved words and issued a decree: 'He could not forsake his rightful Qan. Did he not fight in order to save [the Ong Qan's] life and give him the opportunity to escape? [This] man is worthy to be a companion.' With these words, [Chinggis Qahan] favoured [Qadaq-ba'atur] and spared his life. He [then] said: 'Because Quyildar lost his life [on my behalf], Qadaq-ba'atur and one hundred Jirgins will serve Quyildar's wife and children. If sons are born [to these servants], they will devote themselves to the seed of Quyildar's seed and serve them. If girls are born, their own fathers and mothers shall not marry them off in accordance with their own wishes; let Quyildar's wife and children use them [as servants] in front and behind.' [So] he favoured [Qadaq-ba'atur] and issued the decree. Because Quyildar-sechen's mouth had opened first,[417] Chinggis Qahan favoured him with the following decree: 'Given

416 The Ong Qan and Senggüm would have run towards Chinggis' army in order to realise their escape.

417 Quyildar's mouth 'opened first' in Section 171, when he offered to fight in front of Chinggis Qahan and committed to Chinggis the care of his children in the event of his death.

418 *Abliqa,* translated here as 'recompense', also meant 'reward', 'war-pension', 'bribe'. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 87.

Quyildar's service [to me], [his descendants] throughout the generations shall receive an orphan's recompense.'[418]



CHAPTER SEVEN

[186] [And so] the Kereyit people were brought down. [Chinggis Qahan] distributed them here and there [as booty]. He gave Taqai-ba'atur of the Süldüds one hundred Jirgins in return for his services. Chinggis Qahan issued another decree[419]. The Ong Qan's younger brother, Jaqa-gambu, had two daughters. Chinggis Qahan took his elder daughter, Ibaqa-beki, for himself. The younger daughter, Sorqaqtanibeki, he gave to Tolui.[420] As a result, the people belonging to Jaqa-gambu were not split up. [Chinggis Qahan] said: '[Jaqa-gambu] is [my] second cart-shaft.' He [therefore] favoured him, and did not [distribute his people] as war spoils.

[187] Again, Chinggis Qahan issued a decree: 'Badai and Kishiliq shall, in return for their services, have the Ong Qan's golden tent just as it is, his golden [kumiss] bowls, his cups and containers, his stewards, his people, and his Ongqojit Kereyit duty-men. Let them carry quivers. Let them drink the ceremonial wine. They shall be freedmen across the generations. If they find booty after galloping in pursuit of many enemies, let them take [whatever] they find; if they kill wild beasts, let them take [whatever] they kill.' Chinggis Qahan issued another decree: 'As a result of

419 No decree follows, so the text is perhaps incomplete at this point.

420 Tolui (1193–1232) was Chinggis Qahan's youngest son. He was given a wife in 1203, at the age of eleven. He was captured by a bandit in 1197, at the age of five. (See Section 214. For details, see Saishiyal 1987, pp. 174–176, n. 6.)

Badai's and Kishiliq's service to me, which made the difference for me between life [and death], and [because] of the protection of Eternal Heaven, the Kereyit people have been brought down and I have attained the high throne. From now on, let the seed of my seed that comes to sit on my throne be ever more aware of the services performed on my behalf [by Badai and Kishiliq] and of those who performed them.' They plundered the Kereyit people and distributed them among themselves [so that] nobody went short. They distributed the Tümen-Tübe'ens among themselves [so that all] had enough. Within less than a day, they plundered the Olon-dongqoyits too. They hacked into pieces the heroes [of the] Jirgins, who used to [practise] bloody robbery, [but] were unable to divide them among [themselves]. They killed off large numbers of Kereyit people. They spent the winter at Abji'a-ködeger.

[188] Both the Ong Qan and Senggüm abandoned [their people] and went away. After they had gone, the Ong Qan, being thirsty, went [down to drink] at the Nekün Water in Didik-saqal[421] and came across Qori-sübechi, a watchman of the Naimans.[422] Qori-sübechi captured the Ong Qan. The Ong Qan told [Qori-sübechi] who he was, saying: 'I am the Ong Qan.' [But Qori-sübechi] failed to recognise him or to believe him, and killed him. Senggüm had not [accompanied the Ong Qan] to the Nekün Water at Didik-saqal [but had instead] skirted it and entered the Chöl [Desert]. While searching for water, [he spotted] some wild asses being bitten by gnats. Senggüm dismounted and stole up to them. Senggüm's companion, his equerry Kököchü, had his wife with him. There were three of them in all. [Senggüm] gave his horse to Kököchü to hold, but

421 Didik-saqal, a place name, meant 'clump of [wula] sedge' (i.e., carex meyeriana). *Didik* was an Orkhon Turkish word. For details, see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 283.

422 Although the interlinear note says that Qori-sübechi is a proper name, *sübe* means 'entrance to a pass', while *-chi* is an agent suffix. It may have been Qori's duty to guard some pass in the vicinity. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 179.

after leading his gelding, Kököchü the equerry turned back and trotted off. His wife said:

> 'When [he] donned the golden [cloth],
> when [he] ate tasty [food],

he called you "My Kököchü". How can you forsake your own Qan Senggüm in this way? How can you leave him? How can you abandon him?' His wife stood her ground and remained behind. Kököchü said: 'You are saying [to yourself]: "I shall take Senggüm as my husband ".' His wife replied: 'I have been told that "women have dogs' faces".[423] At least give me his golden cup to draw water for him to drink.' Kököchü threw the golden cup behind him, saying: 'Take it.' He then trotted away. Soon he arrived [where] Chinggis Qahan was. He said [to Chinggis]: 'I have left Senggüm behind in the Chöl [Desert] and come to you.' He then repeated everything that had been said. Afterwards, Chinggis Qahan issued a decree: 'I will show favour to [Kököchü's] wife, [but] as for Kököchü himself, who could trust a man who forsakes his own rightful Qan in this way? [How could I let] such a man become a companion?' [So] he cut him down and threw [his body] aside.

[189] Gürbesü,[424] the mother of Tayang Qan of the Naimans, said: The Ong Qan was formerly the great old Qan. Bring in his head. If it really is his, we will make an offering to it.' She sent an emissary to Qori-sübechi and had him cut off the head and bring it [to her]. [When the head arrived], she recognised it and placed it on a white felt carpet. She got her daughters-in-law to perform the [rites] of a daughters-inlaw.[425] Ceremonial wine was offered and the *qu'ur*[426] was played. Holding a cup, she made an

423 This sentence means that women are loyal to their husbands, but men are not always loyal to their masters.

424 Gürbesü was perhaps a nickname rather than a proper name, for it means 'lizard' (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 206). Gürbesü became a second-ranking queen at the First Palace (see Li Zefen 1970, p. 134).

offering [to the head]. The head smiled in response to the offering. 'It smiled,' said Tayang Qan, and trampled [the head] to pieces. Kökse'ü-sabraq then said: 'You have had the dead Qan's head cut off and brought [to you], [yet] you [trample] it to pieces, How can you justify your action? The sound of our dogs' barking foretells misfortune.'[427] Inancha-bilge Qan said: '[My] wife is young and I am growing old. I begot this Tayang by means of prayers. My son was born stupid. Will he be able to look after and keep [together] my many people with their many bad qualities? The dogs' barking is getting closer. The rule of Gürbesü, our Qatun, has turned harsh. You are weak, my stupid Qan Tayang. You have no skills or desires other than falconry and hunting.' Thus he rebuked [Tayang]. Tayang Qan responded: 'From what I have been told, there are a few Mongqols to the East.[428] They frightened the great Qan of old with their quivers; they caused him to rebel and die. Do they now say that they wish to become qans like [the Ong Qan]? In Heaven above, both the sun and the moon shine brightly—so be it, both sun and moon have their place. Here on earth, however, how can there be two Qans? Let us go and fetch those Mongqols.' His mother Gürbesü replied: 'What will you do [with them]? They stink and their clothes are filthy. They live at a great distance [from us].

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425 De Rachewiltz (vol. 18, pp. 46 and 63) indicates that some special duties were required of the daughters-in-law, but I am inclined to think that the reference is simply to their normal domestic duties. When a bride first entered her bridegroom's family, she took with her the tail fat of three sheep, bowed to the hearth fire three times, and threw the fat on the fire. She then presented new robes to her mother-in-law and aunts. (See Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 148–149.) In the Dawr area, new brides got up early in the morning and filled their father and mother-in-law's pipes with tobacco. Perhaps in this instance they offered filled pipes to the head of the Ong Qan.

426 The Mongolian fiddle.

427 For dogs to bark without obvious cause was taken as a bad omen.

428 The reference is to Chinggis' force.

Let them stay [where they are]. [But] perhaps we can bring their neat daughters-in-law and girls [here]. We will make them wash their hands and feet. Then they can milk our cows and sheep.' Tayang Qan replied: 'If that is so, there is nothing to it. Let us go to those Mongqols and take away their quivers.'

[190] Kökse'ü-sabraq responded: 'You use big words. Is it right to do so, [you] lazy Qan? You [should] keep [such words] to yourself.' In spite of Kökse'ü-sabraq's warning, [Tayang] sent an emissary named Torbi-tashi to say to Alaqush-digit-quri of the Önggüds: 'I am told that there are a few Mongqols to the east. You act as my right flank, and I will join [the attack] from here. We will take their quivers.' [Such] was his message. Ala-qush-digit-quri replied: 'I am unable to act as [your] right flank.' After sending [this reply], Ala-qush-digit-quri sent an emissary named Yoqunan [to Chinggis Qahan with this message]: 'Tayang Qan of the Naimans is coming to take away your quivers. He has asked me to act as [his] right flank. I refused to do so, [but] I send you this warning, for fear that he will remove your quivers.' At the time, Chinggis Qahan was hunting on the Teme'en Steppe. While he was encircling Tülkin-che'üd, Younan, the emissary sent by Ala-ush-digit-quri, arrived with his message. While still grouped together on the hunt, [Chinggis Qahan and his men] discussed together what to do [about] the message. Many of them said: 'Our geldings are lean, what can we now do?'[429] Otchigin-noyan responded: 'You say your geldings are lean—how can you make [such] an excuse? My geldings are fat. How can we sit [here] and hear such words said [about taking away our quivers]?' Belgütei-noyan then said: 'What is the use of living if, while we live, our quivers are taken by the enemy? Is it not right for a man who is born to lay down his bones with his quiver and bow at the time of his death? The Naiman people say, grandly, that their nation is big and compasses many

429 If the geldings are lean, they are weak, and therefore cannot be used in battle.

people. We should respond to these grand words by riding out [against them]. Will it be so difficult to take their quivers? Will not their many horse herds [be] left behind? Will not their palace-yurts [be] left empty? Will not their many people flee into hiding in high places? Given that they speak such great words, how can we sit [here doing nothing]? Let us at once ride out [against them].'[430]

[191] Chinggis Qahan approved Belgütei-noyan's words. After returning from the hunt, he moved from Abjiqa-köteger and set up camp at Keltegei[431] Cliffs at Ör-nu'u on the Qalqa [River]. There, he counted [his soldiers] and formed them into thousands. He appointed the leaders of thousands, the leaders of hundreds, the leaders of tens and the six cherbis[432]—Dodai-cherbi, Doqolqu-cherbi, Ögele-cherbi, Tolun-cherbi, Bucharan-cherbi, and Söyiketü-cherbi. When he had set up the thousands, hundreds, and tens, he chose eighty night-guards and seventy sentries and sent them [to their posts] in shifts. [He chose] the sons and younger brothers of the leaders of the thousands and the hundreds [as well as] the sons and younger brothers of the senior free people and assigned them [to their posts]. He chose those who were skilful, strong, and handsome. He then issued a decree favouring Arqai-qasar: 'Let him choose heroes for a unit of one thousand. On battle days, let them stand in front of me and fight. On the many [ordinary] days, let them guard me in shifts.' He [also] said: 'Let Ögele-cherbi command the seventy sentries, and let him consult with Qudus-qalchan.'

[192] Again, Chinggis Qahan issued a decree: The quiverbearers,[433] sentries on shift duty, cooks, door-keepers, and equerries will go to [their] posts for the day shift. Before the sun sets, they will yield to the night-guards and spend the night with their geldings. At night, the

430 If the Naimans are attacked, they will lack the nerve to stay and fight, and will instead run off without even waiting to take down their yurts and remove their livestock.

431 Tilted.'

432 I.e., 'commanders'.

night-guards will make those [of their number] who are to lie down next to [my] yurt to so lie, and those who are to stand at the door in shifts to so stand. While we eat our early morning broth, the quiver-bearers and sentries will report to the night-guards. The quiver-bearers, sentries, cooks, and door-keepers will carry out their duties in their assigned places. [Those on] the three-day and three-night shift will change shifts after they have completed that shift and spent three nights [and days] on leave. They will become the night-guards [that same] night, and spend the night lying alongside [my yurt].' In this way, [Chinggis Qahan] set up his thousands; he appointed the cherbis and sent the eighty night-guards and the seventy sentries to [their posts] in shifts. He chose heroes for Arqai-qasar and rode out against the Naiman people from the Keltegei Cliffs at Ör-nu'u on the Qalqa [River].

[193] In the Year of the Rat,[434] on the sixteenth day of the first month of summer, a 'red circle' day,[435] [Chinggis Qahan] first made an offering to the banner and then rode upstream along the Kelüren. He sent Jebe and Qubilai ahead as scouts. After reaching the Sa'arl Steppe, they [spied] the Naiman watchmen on the summit of [Mount] Qangqarqan. The watchmen [on both sides] chased after each other. An off-white horse with an inferior saddle was taken from our watchmen by the Naiman watchmen. The Naiman watchmen discussed the horse that they had taken. 'The Mongqols' geldings are lean,' they said. When

433 Bearing a quiver was considered a great honour, and quiverbearers *(qorchin)* were trusted persons. Quivers symbolised the whole array of arms. In Sections 189 and 190, Tayang Qan threatens to take the Mongols' quivers, i.e., to defeat them in battle.

434 1204.

435 On around the fifteenth day of each lunar month, when the position of the sun and moon has shifted to 180 degrees, they are said to face one another and become brighter. The red circle day occurs on the sixteenth day of each lunar month; this phrase appears twice in the text. For the red circle day, see also Saishiyal 1987, p. 27.

[the members of] our [party] reached the Sa'ari Steppe, they halted and discussed what to do. Dodai-cherbi advised Chinggis Qahan as follows: 'We are not only few but also tired after our journey. We should wait until our geldings are sated and, [in the meantime], pitch camp here on the Sa'arl Steppe. Every able-bodied man should light five fires some distance [apart] to scare the Naiman people. They are said to be many, [but] their Qan is said to be weak and not to leave [his] yurt. Our fires will distract them until our geldings are sated. Once our geldings have grown fat, we will pursue the Naiman watchmen and bear down on them so that they [re]join their main [army]. We can take advantage of the confusion to join battle with them.' Chinggis Qahan approved of this proposal and decreed that 'the fires be so lit'. He announced this order to the soldiers. They therefore set up camp on the Sa'arl Steppe, while each able-bodied man lit five fires some way apart [from one another]. At night, the Naiman watchmen on the summit of [Mount] Qangqarqan, seeing the many fires burning in the night, said [to one another]: 'Did we say that the Mongqols are few? There are more fires than stars.' They had [already] sent the off-white horse with the inferior saddle to Tayang Qan. They [now] sent [word] to him that 'Mongqol soldiers have set up camp and choke the Sa'ari Steppe. Daily they appear to grow in numbers. There are more fires than stars.'

[194] Tayang Qan was staying at the Qachir Water on [Mount] Kangqay when this message reached him from the watchmen. On receiving the message, he sent word to his son, Güchülük Qan:[436] The Mongqols' geldings are lean [but] [the watchmen] say that there are more fires than stars and that the Mongqols are many. Now,

if we start to fight in earnest,
will it not be hard to disengage?
If we start to fight in earnest,
they will not blink their black eyes.
Though their cheeks are pierced

and their black blood flows,
they will not shrink.
If we join battle
with the hardy Mongqols,
how will it end?

It is said that the Mongqols' geldings are lean. Let us gather up our people and cross the Altai [Mountains]. We will reorganise our soldiers, we will move off, luring them [behind us], until we reach the southern slopes of the Altai, where we will fight a dog's fight.[437] Our geldings are fat—we should tighten their bellies [at the same time as] tiring out the Mongqols' geldings. [Then], we will launch a counterattack against them.' Güchülük Qan responded: '[That] same old woman Tayang. He says these things [because] his heart fails him. Whence came these many Mongqols [of which you speak]? Most of the Mongqols are with Jamuqa, here in our [hands]. That woman Tayang [is like]

a pregnant woman, who does not go beyond
her pissing place,
a calf, [tethered to a cart]wheel, un[able]
to reach its pasture.

Is this not [why] his heart fails him and he sends these words to me?' He sent [this message] to his father [Tayang Qan] through an emissary. The message pained and hurt his father. Having been spoken of as a woman, Tayang Qan said: 'I hope, when we encounter [the enemy] and slaughter one another, that this arrogance will not desert the powerful and overweening Güchülük. When we

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436 Used here as a proper name, *güchülük* actually meant 'strong' in the Orkhon Turkish dialect. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 209.

437 *Noqai kerel*, 'a dog's fight', means a pretence retreat, followed by a sudden turning and attack.

encounter [them] and earnestly join battle, perhaps it will be difficult to disengage.' Qori-sübechi, a great chief under Tayang Qan, retorted: 'Your father, Inancha-bilge Qan, never showed a man's back or a gelding's rump to an enemy that was his equal. How can your courage fail you [so] early in the day? Had we known that your courage would fail you in this way, we would have brought your mother, Gürbesü, in spite of her sex, and put her in command of the soldiers. What a pity that Kökse'ü-sabraq has become old. Our soldiers' discipline has slackened. Destiny is at present on the side of the Mongqols, not on ours. You are stupid, Tayang. It is all over, you have failed.' With these words, he slapped his quiver and trotted off in the opposite [direction].

[195] Tayang Qan grew furious, and said: 'A dying life, a suffering body—they are common to all [men]. Given that it is so, let us fight.' He moved downstream along the Tamir [River] from the Qachir Water. After crossing the Orqon [River] and passing by the foot of [Mount] Naqu-kun to the east, he arrived at Chakir-ma'ud. As he drew near, Chinggis Qahan's watchmen saw him and sent news that 'the Naimans are approaching'. After receiving this message, Chinggis Qahan issued a decree: '[They] are many and will lose many, [we] are few and will lose few.' Facing them, he rode out and routed their watchmen. He [and his captains] decided to attack and to [re]organise the soldiers to march in 'bushclump' formation, stand in 'lake array', and attack with the 'chisel'.[438] Chinggis Qahan himself [joined] the vanguard. He put Qasar in charge of the main army and Otchigin-noyan in charge of the reserve horses.[439] The Naimans withdrew from Chakir-ma'ud and lined up on the southern side of Naqu-kun, along the foot of the mountain. Our watchmen then pursued the Naiman watchmen until they reached and rejoined their main army on the southern side of Naqu-kun. Tayang Qan saw the pursuit and arrival [of his men]. Jamuqa was with the Naimans, having joined [Tayang Qan] along with his soldiers. Tayang Qan asked Jamuqa: 'Why are these [men] chasing the sheep into the sheep-pen, like so many

wolves? Why do these people pursue [our forces] in this way?' Jamuqa said: 'My sworn brother Temüjin [has] four hounds, raised on human flesh. They have been chained and tied, [but now] they pursue our watchmen. These four hounds [have]

chisels for snouts and
awls for tongues.
With hearts of iron and
whips for swords,
eating the dew and
riding the wind,
they go.
On killing days
they eat the flesh of men.
On fighting days
they take men's flesh as their provisions.

They have been released from their iron chains. Once restrained, they are now on their way [to us], slavering with joy.' Jamuqa also] said: 'You ask who these four hounds are. They are Jebe and Qubilai, Jelme and Sübe'etei.' Tayang Qan said: 'Let us stand at a distance from these barbarians.'[440] They moved slowly back and stood astride the mountain. Seeing [enemy forces] approaching from behind, [their horses] happily kicking their hind legs,

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438 *Qaragana yorchil,* the 'bush clump' formation (*qaraqana* is caragana arborescens, a shrub, while *yorchil* meant movement or marching) entailed dividing the soldiers into numerous small groups that kept contact with each other but maintained a low profile as they advanced. *Na'ur bayidu bayildu,* the 'lake array', entailed sending waves of men to surround and attack the enemy on all sides. *Shi'üchi qatquldu'a,* the 'chisel attack', entailed direct hand-to-hand combat (*qatquldu'a* derives from *qatqu-,* 'stab, poke') by a line of soldiers that drives straight through the middle of the enemy ranks. For details of these three manoeuvres, see Dorontib 1979, pp. 193–195.

439 I.e., of the rearguard.

Tayang Qan again asked Jamuqa: 'What kind of men frisk like foals that have been released in the early [morning], raising dust around their mother and sucking their mother's milk?[441] Why do they approach, making circles in this way?' Jamuqa said:

> They chase men [armed] with spears,
> they pursue the bloody bandits and
> men [armed] with swords.
> They cut them down and kill them.
> These plunderers of treasure
> are known as the Uru'uts and Mangquts.

Do they not rejoice as they happily approach us?' Tayang Qan said: 'If so, let us stand at a distance from these barbarians.' They therefore climbed the mountain and stood [there]. 'Behind them,' said Tayang Qan, '[comes a man] with the appearance of a starved falcon. Who is he who comes [greedily] slavering [in this way], at the head [of an army]?' Jamuqa replied: 'It is my sworn brother Temüjin who is approaching. His whole body

> is stitched with cast copper,
> [so that] there is no crack
> that an awl could pierce;
> forged from wrought iron,
> [so that] there is no crack
> that a leather needle could pierce.

Temüjin my sworn brother is on his way—slavering like a starved falcon. Do you see him? Did you Naiman companions not [say] that when you saw the Mongqols you

440 *Doromji,* translated here as 'barbarians', literally means 'inferiors, second-rate people'. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 283–284.

441 The foals and mother horse symbolise the relationship between battle array and command post. See Dorontib 1979, pp. 196–197, n. 5.

would leave them with not [even] the skin of a kid's hoof? Look [at them now]!' Tayang Qan replied: '[The situation] is most awkward.[442] Let us climb [further] up the mountain and stay [there].' When they had climbed the mountain, Tayang Qan once again asked Jamuqa: 'Who are all those people following in their wake?' Jamuqa said: 'Mother Hö'elün raised one [of] her sons on human flesh.

He has a body of three fathoms,
and the appetite of a three-year old ox.
He wears three layers of armour,
and [his cart] is pulled by three bulls.
He can swallow an entire
man with a quiver,
and [the quiver] will not [even] touch his throat.
To swallow a whole man
does not satisfy his craving.
Whenever he grows angry
he draws [his bow]
and releases his *angqu'a* arrow,[443]
which pierces ten or twenty people
[on the far side of] the mountain.
In battle with the enemy,
he draws [his bow]
and releases his *keyibür* arrow,[444]
which pierces and transfixes
his enemies across the steppe.
When he draws his bow back to the full,

442 The Chinese interlinear note gives *amsa'ari* as 'frightening', but it actually means 'open', 'opening', 'a hole'. (In the Buriad dialect, it means 'stupid'.) The implication is of something unplanned, of a gap in one's strategy, an awkwardness. (For details, see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 90.)

443 An *angqu'a* arrow had a forked head with two points. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 87. It was also known as an *achitu-sumu; in Dawr Mon*gol, achi (hachi) means 'fork'.

his arrows fly nine hundred fathoms.
[Even] when he [only] half draws his bow,
his arrows fly five hundred fathoms.
He is not like any [other] man;
he was born a huge monster.[445]
His name is Jochi-qasar.

That is [who] he is.' Then Tayang Qan said: 'If so, we must struggle upwards to the peak.' They climbed the mountain and stood [there]. Once again, Tayang Qan asked Jamuqa: 'Who comes behind him?' Jamuqa said: 'Mother Hö'elün's youngest son, Otchigin. He is said to be a friendly person. He sleeps early and rises late,

[yet] does not stay behind the [soldiers],
does not remain behind the [battle] lines.

Tayang Qan said: 'In that case, let us go to the [very] summit of the mountain.'

[196] After speaking in this way to Tayang Qan, Jamuqa left the Naimans and stood apart from them. He then sent a message to Chinggis Qahan saying: 'Tell [my] sworn brother: "Tayang Qan was scared to death by my words. In his terror, he has struggled upwards. Frightened by [my] talking of his death, he has climbed the mountain. Sworn brother, be steadfast. They have climbed the mountain and will offer no resistance. I myself have left the Naimans."' It was late and the sun was [setting] when Chinggis Qahan surrounded the Naqu[-kun], [so] they spent the night where they were. That night, the Naimans [tried] to escape. While moving, they rolled down from the summit of Naqu-kun, piling on top of one another. Their bones were smashed and fell to pieces, crushed [like] rotten logs; thus

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444 A *keyibür* arrow was thin and dart-like. A *keyibür* was an irontipped spear or javelin. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 212.

445 *Görölgü,* translated here as 'monster', means 'huge'. See Dorontib 1979, pp. 199–200, n. 14.

they died. The following day, [Chinggis Qahan] finished Tayang Qan off. Güchülük Qan, who was stationed elsewhere, turned his back [on his father] and left with a few men. He was almost captured at his camp on the Tamir [River]. Unable to stay at the camp, he fled. On the southern side of the Altai [Mountains], [Chinggis Qahan] defeated the nation of the Naiman people and subjugated it. Those who had been with Jamuqa—the Jadarans, the Qatagins, the Saji'uts, the Dörbens, the Tayichi'uts, the Onggirats, and others—all submitted at [the same] place. Chinggis Qahan had Tayang's mother, Gürbesü, brought in. He said to her: 'Did you not say that the Mongqols have a bad smell? So why have you come now?' Chinggis Qahan [then] took her [as his wife].

[197] In the autumn of the same Year of the Rat, Chinggis Qahan fought with Toqto'a-beki of the Merkits at the source of the Qaradal.[446] He forced Toqto'a to retreat and plundered his people, his kinsmen, and his nation on the Sa'ari Steppe. Toqto'a, together with his sons Qudu and Chila'un and a few other men, escaped with their lives and went to other places. While the Merkit people were being plundered, Dayir-usun of the Qo'as Merkits decided to show his own daughter, Qulan Qatun, to Chinggis Qahan. On the way, some soldiers stopped him. Dayir-usun met Naya'a-noyan of the Ba'arids and said: 'I wish to show this daughter of mine to Chinggis Qahan. That is why I am here.' Naya'a-noyan said: 'We will show [him] your daughter together.' Detaining Dayir-usun, Naya'a-noyan said: 'If you go by yourself in these confused times, the soldiers [you meet] along the way will not let you live and your daughter will suffer trouble.' He detained [father and daughter] for three days and three nights. After that, he took Qulan Qatun and Dayir-usun to Chinggis Qahan.

446 *Huja'ur,* 'source', usually implies the source of a river. Actually, however, Qaradal is formed from the words *qara* and *dal* (or *tal*), 'Black Steppe', a steppe located southwest of the Mongol city of Khovd (Qobd). See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 171.

Chinggis Qahan said: 'Why did you detain them, Naya'a?' He grew very angry and questioned him severely and in detail, intending to make a [matter of] principle of it. While Chinggis Qahan was questioning Naya'a-noyan, Qulan Qatun [interjected]: 'Naya'a said: "I am Chinggis Qahan's great lord. We will travel together to show your daughter to the Qahan, [for] there are disorderly soldiers along the way." That was the warning that he gave us. Had we not been with Naya'a and met soldiers along the way, we might have encountered trouble amid the confusion. Perhaps meeting Naya'a was our good [fortune]. Before asking Naya'a, the Qahan may, if he favours me, ask[447] [my] body, born by the destiny of Heaven to [my] father and mother.' This was the petition that she set before [the Qahan]. While being questioned [by the Qahan], Naya'a said: 'I will never turn my face away from the Qahan and towards [an]other.

Whenever I encounter
foreign people's girls and women
of beautiful complexion
or geldings with fine rumps
[each time] I say: "These are the Qahan's."

If my desire is other than I indicate, let me die.' Chinggis Qahan approved Qulan Qatun's petition. Promptly that same day, he verified [her words]. Trying her, he found that her petition was [as stated]. Chinggis Qahan showed favour to Qulan Qatun and loved her. Having [found] Naya'a's words to be true, he approved of him. [Chinggis Qahan said:] 'He is a [man] of truthful words. I shall appoint him to great tasks.'[448]

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447 I.e., examine.

448 Chinggis suspected Qulan Qatun of having slept with Dayirusun's daughter during Naya'a's three days' detention of her and Dayir-usun. The daughter explains that Naya'a was merely guarding them on the Qahan's behalf, and suggests that Chinggis examine her to find out for himself. Chinggis does so and declares Naya'a innocent.



CHAPTER EIGHT

[198] [After] plundering the Merkit people, [Chinggis Qahan] gave Döregene, one of the two wives (the other being Tügei) of Toqto'abeki's eldest son, Qudu, to Ögödei Qahan.[449] Half of the [captured] Merkits rebelled and barricaded [themselves] inside the Taiqal[450] Barricade. Chinggis Qahan then gave orders for Sorqan-shira's son Chimbai to take command and sent him to surround and attack the barricaded Merkits with the soldiers of the leftflank [army]. Chinggis Qahan pursued Toqto'a, who, together with his two sons Qudu and Chila'un and a handful of men, had turned and fled for their lives. Chinggis Qahan spent the winter on the southern side of the Altai [Mountains]. In the spring of the Year of the Ox, [451] while [Chinggis Qahan] was crossing the Arai,[452] Güchülük of the Naimans, whose people had been captured, rebelled against [Chinggis Qahan] and, together with a small number of men, united with Toqto'a of the Merkits. They joined forces [to attack] at Buqdurma,[453] the source of the Erdish [River]. [Each] put his soldiers in order. When Chinggis Qahan arrived, he and they fought

449 Actually, he was not yet Qahan in 1204.

450 *Taiqal (taiga, tayiga),* 'steep overhanging cliffs' in the Orkhon Turkish dialect, also referred to forests in mountain areas. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 254. Here, however, it is a proper name.

451 1205.

452 Alai. See Choiji 1984, p. 463, n. 2.

each other. Toqto'a fell, hit by a stray arrow.[454] Unable to bury his bones or take away his body, his sons cut off his head and to take with them. [Even] together, the Naimans and Merkits were unable to stand [firm]. Instead, they retreated across the Erdish, where most of them drowned. A few managed to cross the Erdish, [after which] they split up. Güchülük Qan of the Naimans travelled through [the territories of] the Ui'urtais and the Qarlu'uts before going to join the Gür Qan of the Qara-kitads, who was camped on the Chui River in the land of the Sarda'uls. The sons of Toqto'a the Merkit—Qudu, Qat,[455] and Chila'un—and other Merkits set off through the [territory of] the Kanglins and the Kimcha'uts. From there, Chinggis Qahan returned across the Arai to [his] base camp. Chimbai had finished off the Merkits at the Taiqal Barricade. Chinggis Qahan then issued a decree [concerning these] Merkits: Those who should be killed have been killed. The rest have been treated as war spoils by [our] soldiers.' The Merkits who had formerly submitted again rose up in rebellion at the base camp. [Fortunately], those of our retainers [left behind] in the base camp managed to overcome them. Chinggis Qahan then issued a decree: 'I said that I would let them stay together as a [tribe], but they revolted.' So he divided the Merkits [and sent groups of them off] in all directions until they were no more.

[199] In the same Year of the Ox,[456] Chinggis Qahan issued a decree: 'Let Sübe'etei pursue the sons of Toqto'a—Qudu, Qal, and Chila'un—in his iron cart.'[457] Chinggis Qahan issued a decree and had it taken by word of mouth to Sübe'etei: 'Qudu, Qal, and Chila'un—the sons of Toqto'a became frightened [of us] and retreated, [all the while]

453 The Buqdurma River, the source of the Erdish River, is in present-day Ulaangom. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 155.

454 The word *shiba* in the text many means not 'stray' but a particular type of arrow. In the Orkhon Turkish dialect, *shiba* meant arrows that came raining down. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 247.

455 Qal.

shooting arrows at us, [but] they fled like wild asses with lassos [round their necks], like deer with arrows [in their flesh]. If they grow wings and fly up into the sky, will not you, Übe'etei, turn into a gerfalcon and fly [up] after them? If they become marmots, burrowing their way into the earth with their claws, will you not become an iron rod with which to strike [the ground], search them out, and catch them up? If they become fish and [swim] into the Tenggis Ocean, will you, Sübe'etei, not become a large-game net, a small-game net, scooping and netting them up? Once more I send you to cross high passes and ford wide rivers. Remember that [there are] distant lands [to cross]. Spare your soldiers' mounts lest they become [too] lean, husband your provisions lest they are used up. If a gelding wastes away completely, there is no [longer any] point in sparing it. If your provisions run out completely, there is no [longer any] point in husbanding them. You will encounter many wild beasts along the way. Think ahead as you go. Do not let your soldiers gallop in pursuit of the wild beasts or hunt endlessly. If you wish to supplement your soldiers' provisions and hunt in groups, then set limits to such hunting. Apart from limited hunting [of that sort], do not allow [your] soldiers to buckle cruppers to their horses' saddles, tighten their bridles, or let the bit [hang] free [under the horses' mouths]. If you issue orders [to the contrary], how can [your] soldiers gallop? Seize and

456 Although the text implies that the decree was issued in the same Year of the Ox, 1205, as in Section 198, Sübe'etei actually left in 1216 and destroyed Toqto'a's two sons in 1217, the next Year of the Ox. See Li Zefen 1970, p. 581. A similar mistake in the twelve-year cycle is made by the author(s) of the History in Section 202, where they date events that took place in 1218 to 1206, the previous Year of the Tiger.

457 The iron cart was in fact a wooden cart with wheels reinforced with iron. The word *telege,* 'cart', is used instead of the more common *terge(n),* similar to the Orkhon Turkish *tälgän,* a wooden machine intended for use in battle. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 259, and Mansang 1985, p. 258, n. 8.

beat those who disobey [your] orders. Those known to us who violate our decree shall be sent to us. The greater number not known to us shall be executed on the spot.

Beyond the rivers
you will be separated [from us].[458]
[But] persist with the same principle [of loyalty].
Beyond the mountains
you will be divided [from us].
[But] think only of [your quest].

If Eternal Heaven grants you the added strength and might to take hold of the sons of Toqto'a, what use is there in bringing them [back here]? Dispatch them on the spot.' Again, Chinggis Qahan said to Sübe'etei: 'I send you out hunting [now] [because], when I was young, I was frightened by the Uduyit of the Three Merkits as they circled three times round [Mount] Burqan-qaldun. Now, other of my sworn enemies are again swearing [oaths against me] with their mouths and tongues. You [must] go to the furthest limits and the deepest depths. You shall pursue them to the end with the iron cart that I have had made. In [this] Year of the Ox, I send you into battle. If, when you go, you imagine to yourself that we are facing you even though we are behind you, and that [we] are close to you even though [we are] far [from you], you will receive the protection of Heaven Above.'

[200] When [Chinggis Qahan] had finished destroying the Naimans and the Merkits,[459] Jamuqa, who was [with the Naimans], saw his people taken. Together with five companions, he became a robber. The [six of them] climbed the Tanglu [Mountains],[460] where they killed, roasted, and ate a wild sheep.Jamuqa then said to his companions: 'Who else's sons are today killing wild sheep to eat?'[461] While they sat eating the sheep, Jamuqa's five companions laid hands on him, seized him, and brought him to

458 See Introduction, p. 33.

Chinggis Qahan. Captured and dragged off by his own companions, Jamuqa sent word to his sworn brother the Qahan:

> 'It has come to pass
> that black crows
> capture the mandarin duck.[462]
> It has come to pass
> that commoners and slaves lay hands
> on their own Qan.
> Qahan, my sworn brother, how
> can you fail to recognise [this crime]?
> It has come to pass
> that the brown buzzards
> capture the drakes and ducks.
> It has come to pass
> that slaves and slave-girls capture
> their rightful lord,
> by surrounding and attacking him.
> my wise sworn brother, how
> can you fail to recognise [this crime]?'

Chinggis Qahan responded to Jamuqa's words with a decree: 'How can I allow men who have laid hands on their rightful Qan to live? How can such men be deemed companions? Let those who raised their hands against their rightful Qan be executed, together with all their kinsmen.' In the presence of Jamuqa, he ordered the

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459 In 1205.

460 The Tanglu Mountains are the present day Tangnu Range on Mongolia's northwestern border.

461 Jamuqa's complaint indicates the depths to which he has sunk.

462 *Qarambai nogosu* was a purple-coloured Mandarin duck (aix galericulata, see Dorontib 1979, p. 216, n. 3, and *Cihai,* p. 3421, Hong Kong 1979), and not, as other translators suggest, a generic term for ducks.

killing of those who had laid hands on him. Chinggis Qahan said: 'Tell Jamuqa this: Now that we two have joined [together], let us be companions. If we become [to each other as] the two shafts [of a cart], would you think differently [from me] and consider separating [from me]? Now that we are joined [together] once [again], we should

remind each other
of [things] we have forgotten,
wake each other from our sleep.
[Even] when you went away and lived apart [from me],
you were [still] my fortunate and blessed sworn brother.
Surely your stomach and your heart
ached [for me]
in the days of killing and of being killed.
[Even] when you lived apart [from me] and went away,
surely your bosom and your heart
ached [for me]
in the days of slaying and of being slain.
If you ask when,
[my answer is]
that it was when I fought
with the Kereyit people
at Qalaqaljit Sands
and you informed me of your words
to [my] father, the Ong Qan.

[That message] was your service [to me]. Again, you sent a message [about] the Naiman people in which you said that

by [your] words you made them die,
by [your] mouth you killed them.
You convinced me by that message that
I should fight back
against the frightened ones.

[That, too,] was your service [to me].0146

[201] After [Chinggis Qahan] had spoken, Jamuqa said: 'In earlier days, when we were young, I agreed with the Qan, [my] sworn brother, to swear brotherhood in the Qorqonaq Forest. Together, we ate the food that is not to be digested[463] and spoke the words that are not to be forgotten,

[sleeping] under a single quilt.
We have been provoked
by a man cutting across,
we have been pricked
by a man on the side.
We were completely separated.
I told [another]
about my jealousy towards you.
[I feared that] my black face
had been flayed [by shame]
and I would be unable
to come close to you.
Unable to look upon the kind face
of my sworn brother, the Qan,
I went.
I told [myself]
that we had exchanged
the words that are not to be forgotten,
[I feared that] my red face
had peeled [with shame].
Unable to look upon the true face
of my far-sighted sworn brother,
I went.

Now my sworn brother, the Qan, shows favour to me and says: "Let us be companions." [But] when it was the time

463 This 'food that is not to be digested' *(ülü shinggeküi ide'e)* is gold dust, mixed with a little liquid and swallowed by men swearing brotherhood. (In the old days, they would have sipped a little of each other's blood.) See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 131.

for us to become companions, I did not do so. Now, [my] sworn brother,

[you] have pacified [our] entire people,
you have unified all the foreign [peoples].

They have shown the throne [of the] Qan to you. Now that the world is ready for you, what use is there in my becoming [your] companion? On the contrary, sworn brother, in the black night I would haunt your dreams, in the bright day I would trouble your thoughts.

I would be the louse in your collar,
the splinter in your door-panel.[464]
I had useless paternal grandmothers;[465]
by thinking of [attaining]
that which is beyond [my] sworn brother,
I erred.

In the lives [of] the two of us, sworn brother, our names have risen and set with the sun, [but] you were born a hero, to a wise mother. You had skilful younger brothers and seventy-three geldings as your powerful companions.[466] I was overwhelmed by [you, my] sworn brother. I lost my mother and father when I was small and I have no younger brothers. My wife is a chatterer and I have no trusted companions. As a result, I was overwhelmed by

464 The 'splinter in your door-panel' refers to some minor irritant. Other translators follow the Chinese interlinear note, which gives 'inner lapel' (of a coat) for *jahing,* 'door panel'. But *jahing* refers either to the wooden door itself (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 290) or to the handle *(jashing)* of such a door (see Dorontib 1979, p. 219).

465 *Arbi Khün* means a useless person. For details, see *Mongol-Khitad Toli* (Mongol-Chinese Dictionary), published by the Inner Mongolian Publishing House, Khökh Khot 1976, p. 92. (See Nei Menggu daxue Menggu yuwen yanjiushi 1976–1977, p. 92.)

[you, my] sworn brother, destined by Heaven. If you favour me, sworn brother, put a quick end to me, and then your heart will be at peace. [If] you favour me, sworn brother, let me die without shedding my blood. Kill me and lay my bones in a high place. [Then] I will protect and bless the seed of your seed forever. My origins are different from [yours].[467] I was crushed by the majesty of [my] sworn brother, my superior by birth. Do not forget the words that I have spoken. Remember them at night and in the morning. Remind each other of them. Now put a quick end to me.' [When Jamuqa] had spoken, Chinggis Qahan responded as follows to his words: 'My sworn brother set himself apart [from me] and has spoken mouthfuls against us, [yet] I have not heard that he hoped to harm [my] life. He is a man to learn from, [but] still he is unwilling [to become my companion]. If I say "Let him die", [a sign to do so] would not appear in the course of divination. For me to harm his life without reason would not be fitting.[468] He is a man of serious principles. [But] tell him that [this] might be the reason [for my action]: "Because both Chojidarmala and Taichar robbed each other of their horseherds, you, [my] sworn brother Jamuqa, perversely stirred up a rebellion. We fought each other at Dalan-baljut and you forced me to hide in the Jerene Pass. Did you not cause me to be afraid there? If I now say "Let us be companions", you will reject my offer. If I try to spare your life, you will not

466 'Geldings' here means warriors. (See, for example, Section 272, where Tolui tells Ögödei that their father, Chinggis Qahan, chose Ögödei 'as one would choose a gelding'). The seventythree geldings refer to the seventy-three outstanding warriors, who would have included Chinggis' mother, younger brothers, and relatives, as well as various other warriors.

467 Jamuqa was a member of the Jadaran clan, not of Chinggis' Borjigin clan. Jamuqa knew that Chinggis hated the nobles of his own clan, who had betrayed him and been executed as a result. So Jamuqa thought that Chinggis was wrong to treat him as one of the treacherous nobles of Chinggis' own clan.

wish [me to do so].” [So] tell him: “In accordance with your words, I shall kill you without shedding your blood.”’ After saying this, [Chinggis Qahan] decreed that Jamuqa] should be put to death without his blood being shed and that his bones should not be abandoned in the open but buried decently. [So] he killed Jamuqa and had his bones buried.

[202] After [Chinggis Qahan] had unified the people of the felt-walled tents,[469] they assembled at the source of the Onon River in the Year of the Tiger.[470] After hoisting a white banner with nine pennants, they bestowed the title ‘Qan’ on Chinggis Qahan and the title ‘Guy Ong’ on Muqali.[471] They also sent Jebe into battle, in pursuit of Güchülük Qan of the Naimans. Having finally imposed order on the Mongol peoples,[472] Chinggis Qahan issued the following decree: ‘I wish to bestow favours on those of you who have served together with [me] in establishing [this] nation [by] forming units of one thousand [households] and appointing you as their commanders.’ He appointed as the commanders of the thousands Father Mönglik, Bo’orchu, Muqali guy-ong, Qorchi, Ilügei, Jürchedei, Qunan, Qubilai, Jelme, Tüge, Degei, Tolon, Önggür, Chülgetei, Boroqul, Shigi-qutuqu, Göchü, Kököchü, Qorqosun, Hüsün, Quyildar, Shiluqai,[473] Jetei, Taqai, Chaqa’an-qo’a, Alaq, Sorqan-shira, Buluqan, Qarachar, Kökö-chös, Süyiketü,

468 Jamuqa knew that Chinggis disapproved of people who changed sides. Chinggis does not want to kill him because he is an *anda,* or sworn brother. Moreover, he does not want to damage his own reputation for fairness by killing someone without proper justification.

469 See Introduction, p. 4.

470 1206.

471 Guy Ong was a title of Chinese origin meaning ‘Prince of the State’. See Dorontib 1979, p. 223, n. 5. In reality, the title was not conferred until twelve years later, in 1218. Jebe’s mission, mentioned in the next line, also happened in 1218 rather than in 1206. See Dorontib 1979, pp. 223–224, n. 6.

472 The Mongol peoples (or Mongol state) consisted of the Tatar, Onggirat, Tayichi’ut, Kereyit, Naiman, Merkit, and Jadaran tribes, together with various other smaller tribes.

Naya'a, Jüngshöi, Güchügür, Bala, Oronartai, Dayir, Müge, Bujir, Mönggü'ür, Dolo'adai, Bögen, Qudus, Maral, Jebke, Yuruqan, Kökö, Jebe, Üdütai, Bala-cherbi, Kete, Sübe'etei, Möngkö-qalja, Qurchaqus, Geügi, Badai, Kishiliq, Ketei, Cha'urqai, Onggiran, Toqontemür, Megetü, Qada'an, Moroqa, Dori-buqa, Iduqadai, Shiraqul, Da'wun, Tamachi, Qa'uran, Alchi, Tobsaqa, Tungquidai, Tobuqa, Ajinai, Tüyideger, Seche'ür, Jeder, Olar-güregen, Kinggiyadai, Buqa-güregen, Quril, Ashiggüregen, Qadai-güregen, Chigü-güregen, Alchi-güregen [commanding] three thousand Onggirats, Butu-güregen, [commanding] two thousand Ikires, and Ala-qush-digit-quri-güregen of the Önggüts, [commanding] five thousand Önggüts. Excluding the people of the forest, [these] were the commanders of the thousands of the Mongqol people named by Chinggis Qahan. [Together,] they became the commanders of ninety-five thousand [men].

[203] Chinggis Qahan [then] issued a further decree: 'After appointing those named—including my sons-in-law—to be [each] the commander of one of the ninety-five thousand [households], I wish to grant favours to [some] among them for their services [to me].' Chinggis Qahan [then] decreed: 'Let Bo'orchu, Muqali, and the other commanders come.' [Chinggis Qahan] said to Shigi-qutuqu, [474] who was inside the yurt at the time: 'Go and summon them.' [But] Shigi-qutuqu responded: 'Whose services [to you] are outclassed by those of Bo'orchu, Muqali, and the rest? Whose contribution is outstripped? [If] favours must be given, surely my services [to you] did not fall short, surely I served you to the full?

From [my] time in the cradle
at your noble threshold
until these bristles sprouted on [my] chin

473 Shilügei.

474 See Section 138. In 1206, he became Chief Justice.

I have thought of no one else.
From [the time] of my incontinence at the crotch[475]
at your golden threshold
until these bristles sprouted at [my] mouth
I made no false steps.
She[476] made me lie at her feet,
and even raised as her son.
She made me lie at her side,
and even raised me as [your] younger brother.

What favour will you now bestow on me?' At these words, Chinggis Qahan said to Shigi-qutuqu: 'Are you not the sixth younger brother? On you, my last-born younger brother, I bestow the same shares as on [all my other] younger brothers. Furthermore, in recognition of your services, you will not be punished for [up to] nine crimes.' He also said: 'While I am setting in order the entire nation under the protection of Eternal Heaven, you have become [my] seeing eyes, [my] listening ears. Share out the entire nation among [our] mother, us,[477] [my] younger brothers, and [my] sons. Divide up the [people] of the felt-walled yurts, according to the names of their tribes. Separate the [inhabitants] of the board-doored [dwellings] and let none countermand your word.' Again he said to Shigi-qutuqu:

'Punish the thieves and
put right the lies

of the entire nation. Kill those who deserve to be killed and punish those who deserve to be punished.' And he appointed [Shigi-qutuqu] to hold judgment over all. Then he said to him: 'Write down in a blue book a list of the shares into which [you] divide the nation and of the judgments

475 *Shi'ek,* 'incontinence at the crotch', means infancy. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 246.

476 I.e., Mother Hö'elün.

477 I.e., Chinggis himself.

[you] deliver. Unto the seed of [my] seed, let no one alter the blue writing of Shigi-qutuqu, ordained in consultation with me, [written] on white paper in a blue book and made into a register. Anyone who alters it shall be [found] guilty.' [But] Shigi-qutuqu said: 'How can a last-born younger brother like me take the same share as [the others]? If the Qahan [wishes to bestow] a favour on me, let [it be] an earth-walled town.'[478] [Chinggis Qahan] responded: 'You have lowered yourself, you yourself have decided [what your reward shall be].' Having been favoured in this way, Shigi-qutuqu went out and called Bo'orchu, Muqali, and the other commanders to [the yurt].

[204] Chinggis Qahan, issuing a decree, said to Father Mönglik:

'[You] were born together with me,
[you] grew up together with [me].
You are lucky and blessed.

How many times [have I received] your services and protection? [There was the time when my] father the Ong Qan and [my] sworn brother Senggüm tricked [me] into attending [the betrothal feast]. On the way, I spent the night in Father Mönglik's yurt. Father Mönglik, had you not dissuaded [me], I would have entered

the swirling waters,
the red fire.

That service alone will be remembered [even] unto the seed of [my] seed. In recognition of that service, you shall sit on the corner of this seat.[479] Every year and every month, I shall bestow gifts upon you.[480] This favour will continue unto the seed of [your] seed.'

[205] To Bo'orchu, Chinggis Qahan said: 'When small, I was robbed of eight horses, the light bay geldings. I

478 Shigi-qutuqu was perhaps referring to the towns of the Naimans in western Mongolia.

pursued them for three nights. We met along the way and you said [to me]: “You have come in suffering, I will become a companion to [you].” You were milking your mare at the time. Without [even sending] a message to your father in the yurt, you hid your leather bag and bucket in the open field, made me give up my bald-tailed chestnut [horse in exchange for] a black-headed grey, and rode [off together with me] on a swift dun. You left your horse-herds without a master, hastened from the steppe, and became my companion. We spent a further three nights in pursuit. We approached a circular camp at whose edge the stolen light bay geldings stood. We stole them [back]. Together, we drove them off, escaped, and brought them [back]. Your father was Naqu Bayan.[481] You were his only son. What did you know about me when you became my companion? The courage of your heart convinced you to become [my] companion. I constantly thought of [you] in later times and sent Belgütei to say: “Let us [once again] be companions.” Riding a chestnut horse with a hunched back, tying your grey woollen cloak across the saddle, you came to be my companion. When the Three Merkits [attacked] and circled round us three times at [Mount] Burqan, you circled with [me]. Later, when I lay asleep after fighting with the Tatar people at Dalan-nemürges and the rain was pouring down continuously, day and night, you shielded me with your cloak to prevent the rain from falling on me. Throughout the whole night, you only once shifted [your weight] from [one foot] to the other. [This act] was a sign of your bravery. There is no end to your brave [acts]. Bo’orchu and

479 *Huja’ur,* ‘root, origin, source’, is probably a mistake for *üjü’ür,* ‘tip, extremity’; hence, ‘the corner of this seat’.

480 *Sataju,* ‘bestow [in charity]’, derives from the Orkhon Turkish *sadaka,* ‘goods in charity’. When Mongol queens or princesses gave birth to a son, they received gifts of gold, silver, and silk from their Qahans. These gifts were called *sadaqa.* For *sataju,* see Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 235–236; for *sa’adaq,* see Eldengtei and Ardajab 1986, pp. 683–684, n. 8.

481 ‘Naqu the Rich.’

Muqali, you allowed me to achieve this throne [by] encouraging me to do what was right and dissuading me from doing what was wrong. Now, you shall sit on seats above all [others] and not [be] punished for [up to] nine crimes. Bo'orchu, you will be in charge of the ten thousand [households] of the right flank, right up to the Altai.'[482]

[206] Chinggis Qahan said to Muqali: 'When we set up camp in the Qorqonaq Forest, by the Saqlaqar Tree under which Qutula Qan danced, I pledged my word to Muqali, because of the omen given to Muqali by Heaven and in memory of [his father] Gü'ün-qo'a.[483] As a result, [I] sit [now] on an upper seat; unto the seed of his seed, Muqali shall be the Guy-Ong of the entire people.' So saying, he gave [Muqali] the title of Guy-Ong and decreed: 'Let Muqali take charge of the ten thousand [households] of the left flank, right up to Qara'un-judün.'[484]

[207] Chinggis Qahan [then] said to Qorchi: '[Once] you made a prophesy [about] me.[485] For many years, from my infancy until this day,

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482 The word *derelegün* in these sections, meaning 'pillowing', is a mistake for *derelegin,* 'the foot [of a mountain]'. In the thirteenth century, the Mongols were divided into the Nirugun Mongqols, i.e., the 'mountain-range Mongols', and the Derelegin Mongols, i.e., the mountain-foot Mongols. See Irenchin 1987, pp. 195–196, n. 2.

483 'During the campaign against the Naimans of 1204–1205, our army was on the point of defeat. Chinggis Qahan, together with his seven cavalrymen, was fleeing and short of provisions. Gü'ün-qo'a captured a two-year-old camel by the waterside, roasted it over a fire, and presented it to Chinggis Qahan. By that time, the [Naiman] enemy was pursuing them. At that moment, the horse that Chinggis Qahan was riding died of wounds; the six cavalrymen looked at each other in panic, not knowing what to do. The seventh cavalryman, Gü'ün-qo'a, dismounted from his horse and gave it to Chinggis Qahan to ride. He then fought the approached enemy, and was killed by them." See *The Nine Great Commanders of Temüjin,* edited by Öliji, translated from the Chinese by B. Bagana, Hailar: Nei Menggu wenhua chubanshe, 1984, pp. 1–2 and n. 13.

when it was wet, we bore the wet together,
when it was cold, we bore the cold together.

You have, all along, been a strong[486] and blessed [man]. At the time, Qorchi, you said: “If this prediction proves to be correct, and if Heaven blesses [your] desires, then give me thirty women.” Because [the prediction] did prove to be correct, I shall favour you. Inspect the fine women and fine girls of the subjugated peoples and choose thirty of them.’ Again he spoke: ‘In addition to the three thousand Ba’arins [that he commands], Qorchi shall, together with both Taqai and Ashiq, make up a full [unit of] ten thousand [with] the Chinos, the Tö’ölös, and the Telenggüts of the Adarkins and take charge of them. Freely establishing his camp along the Erdish [River] up to the camps [of] the people of the forest, he shall subdue the people of the forest. Let Qorchi take charge of the ten thousand.’ He [then] said: The people of the forest shall do nothing without consulting Qorchi. [As for those who] ‘act without consultation—why hesitate?’[487]

[208] To Jürchedei, Chinggis Qahan said: ‘Your major service was when we were fighting the Kereyits at Qalaqaljit Sands, at a time when I was worried [about the outcome of the battle]. Sworn brother Quyildar promised [to protect me], [but] you, Jürchedei, carried out the task [instead]. In so doing, you attacked the Jirgins, the

484 Qara’un-jidun, first mentioned in Section 183, is a mountain range in northwestern Manchuria, now known as Xing’ an to the Chinese and Shike (Yeke) Qahan to the Mongols. It is known as Jiden Dawaa in the Dawr Mongol area.

485 For this prophecy, see Section 121. The stem of *jönglejü,* the word used here, derives from jöng, ‘drawing lots’, ‘prophesying’. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 302–303.

486 ‘Strong’ is my translation of *nendü* (*nendü’üt* in Section 231), which is probably derived from *mendü,* ‘strong and healthy’. Other translators interpret this word as a reference to the beneficent Nenü(k) spirit. See, for example, De Rachewiltz 1971–1984, vol. 21, pp. 30 and 53–54.

Tübegens, the Dongqayids, the Quri-shilemün, and the thousand Torqods. You overcame all the important soldiers. Reaching [their] main army, you pierced Senggüm's cheek with an *uchuma*[488] arrow. Because of this, the door's rein[489] was opened [for me] by Eternal Heaven. Had Senggüm not been wounded, what would have become of us? That was Jürchedei's weightiest and greatest service. After taking leave [of him], we went off down the Qalqa, [but] Jürchedei was always in my mind, [like] the shelter of a high mountain. We went to water [the animals] at Lake Baljuna. Then we rode out from Lake Baljuna and [I] sent Jürchedei [ahead] as a scout. We rode out against the Kereyits and, fortified by Heaven and Earth, finished them off and plundered them. With the [most] important nation thus razed, the countenance of the Naimans and the Merkits was dashed. [Lacking the confidence] to fight, they scattered. With the Merkits and the Naimans thus scattered, Jaqa-gambu of the Kereyits had, on account of his two daughters, remained together with his subjects as an intact people. When [Jaqa-gambu] became [our] enemy for a second time, Jürchedei lured by tricks those who had separated [from us in this way]. He seized and captured Jaqa-gambu, who had cut all ties [with us], and [suffocated] him to death. Then we killed and plundered Jaqa-gambu's people for a second time. This was Jürchedei's second service.'

In the days of slaying and of being slain,
he disregarded own his life.
In the days of killing and of being killed,
he strove to advance.
Because of this

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487 I.e., punish them.

488 For *uchuma,* see p. 148, n. 387.

489 I.e., bolt.

Chinggis Qahan, favouring Jürchedei, gave Ibaqa-beki to him [as a wife]. He said to Ibaqa: 'I have not said that you are unintelligent, or that your looks and complexion are bad. You have entered my breast and my feet. At the allotted time, I dismounted to visit you, and have settled among the ranks [of my wives].[490] Mindful of the great principle [by which deeds are rewarded], I will favour Jürchedei [because] of his services.

In the days of fighting and of being fought,
he became our shield.
Against the enemy,
he became our shelter.
He brought together
the separated people.
He united
the scattered people.

Mindful of that principle, I give you to him. From now on, my seed that sits upon our throne shall be mindful of the principle [of rewarding] services such as these. Let them not countermand my words. Unto the seed of my seed, they shall not displace Ibaqa's seat [among the imperial wives].' Again, Chinggis Qahan said to lbaqa: 'Your father, Jaqa-gambu, gave you two hundred servants [as] dowry; he [also gave] you the two cooks, Ashiq-temür and Alchiq.[491] Now, you will [join] the Uru'ut people. From your dowry, give me as a legacy Ashiq-temür, your cook, and one hundred servants, and [then] go.' After taking them,

490 According to Mongol custom in the thirteenth century, the master of the yurt slept in the yurt's northern part together with his principal wife, their heads facing west. The second wife slept under the master's feet. See Eldengtei and Ardajab 1986, pp. 703–704, n. 22.

491 Ashiq-temür, here used as a proper name, is made up of the Orkhon Turkish *ashik,* 'helmet', and *temür,* 'iron', and therefore means 'iron helmet'. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 95. Alchiq, another proper name, meant 'spy' in the Orkhon Turkish dialect. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 91.

Chinggis Qahan again said to Jürchedei: 'I give my Ibaqa to you. Will you not [also] take charge of your four thousand Uru'ut [households]?' So he decreed, bestowing his favour on [Jürchedei].



CHAPTER NINE

[209] Then Chinggis Qahan said to Qubilai: 'For me you pressed [down]

the necks of the powerful,
the buttocks of wrestlers.

You, Qubilai, Jelme, Jebe, and Sübegetei—my four hounds when I pointed you in the direction of [the place] I had in mind,

when I said, "Reach [that place],"
you smashed the ores.
When I said, "Attack!"
you split the rocks.
You broke the shining stones to pieces,
you parted the deep waters.[492]

Qubilai, Jelme, Jebe, and Sübe'etei, you my four hounds, I sent to the appointed place. When my four war-horses, Bo'orchu, Muqali, Boroqul, and Chila'un-ba'atur, stood beside me in the days of fighting and I made Jürchedei and Quyildar stand before me with their Uru'ut and Mangqut [troops], my mind was at ease.' He issued a decree favouring [Qubilai]: 'Will you, Qubilai, not take charge of the affairs of the armies?' He [then] added: 'Because of Bedü'ün's obstinacy, I acted badly towards him and failed

492 His 'four hounds' obeyed his orders to fight.

to give him the rank of commander of one thousand [households]. You, [however], get on with him; he will be able to manage a thousand [if] he consults with you.' Again he said: 'After some time, we will assess Bedü'ün's actions.'[493]

[210] Chinggis Qahan said [of] the Qunan of the Geniges: 'For you, Bo'orchu, Muqali, and the other commanders, and for you, Dodai, Doqolqu, and the other cherbi, this Qunan became a wolf in the black night, a crow in the bright day. When we were on the move, he did not stop [to rest]; when we stopped [to rest], he did not move.

With outsiders,
he did not assume another face.[494]
With [my] enemies,
he did not assume another face.

Do not act without consulting with both Qunan and Kökö-chos; act [only after] consulting with them both.' He [then] issued a [further] decree: 'Jochi is my eldest son. Let Qunan, leading his Geniges under Jochi, be the commander of ten thousand [households].' [He continued:] 'Qunan, Kökö-chos, Degei, and Old Man Üsün—those four never hid [from me] what they saw, never concealed [from me] what they heard.'

[211] Chinggis Qahan then said to Jelme: 'When I was born at Deli'ün-boldaq on the Onon, Old Man Jarchi'udai came down from Burqan-qaldun, carrying his bellows on his back, [at a time when] Jelme was still in his cradle. He brought [me] swaddling clothes of sable. Since becoming my companion, [Jelme] has been

the slave of [my] threshold,
the personal slave of [my] door.

493 Nothing else is known of Bedü'ün.

494 I.e., he did not befriend the enemy.

Jelme's services are many -

he was born together with me,
he grew up together with [me].

[Our companionship] has its origin in [those] sable swaddling clothes, he is fortunate and blessed. Jelme may commit [up to] nine crimes without being found guilty.'

[212] Chinggis Qahan then said to Tolun: 'How can it be that you, father and son, [each] have charge of a separate thousand [households]? When you, [Tolun], were assembling the people, you and your father were as two wings. You strove together to gather up the people—as a result, I bestowed upon you the title of cherbi. Will you not now consult with the guards and, together with those men that you have assembled and obtained by yourself, form your own [unit of one] thousand [households]?'[495]

[213] Again, Chinggis Qahan said to Önggür the cook: 'The Three Toqura'uts, the Five Tarquts, and you, Önggür, the son of Mönggetü-kiyan,[496] with your Changshi'ut and Baya'ut [men], became one camp for me. You Önggür,

did not lose your way in the fog,
did not forsake [us] in the battle.
When it was wet, we bore the wet together,
when it was cold, we bore the cold together.

495 The night-guards occupied an extremely important political position in the Mongol army. In Section 234, Chinggis issued the following decree: 'Of the night-guards, [those] with judicial duties shall hear judgments together with Shigi-qutuqu.' In Section 212, Chinggis said: 'I bestowed upon you the title of cherbi. Will you not now consult with the guards¨?'. (For the guards, see Choiji 1984, p. 290, n. 7.) Both these passages demonstrate the guards' importance. In battles, Chinggis always held back his main forces, which comprised the night-guards and sentries. Only if the battle see-sawed did he give orders for them to attack. In Section 228, Chinggis is reported as saying: 'My guards are senior [in rank] to the leaders of thousands [of households serving] outside [the palace].'s

What favour will you now take?' Önggür replied: 'If I may choose my favour, [let it be this]: My Baya'ut kinsmen are scattered across the tribes. As your favour, allow me to assemble my Baya'ut kinsmen.' Chinggis Qahan responded with a decree: 'So be it. Assemble your Baya'ut kinsmen and take command of a [unit of one] thousand [households].' Chinggis Qahan issued a further decree: 'You, Önggür and Boro'ul, [my] two cooks, distribute food to the right and to the left. On the right, let there be no lack [of food] for those who stand and those who sit. On the left, let there be no lack [of food] for those who line up and those who do not line up. If you distribute [the food] in such a way, my throat will not choke and my heart will be at ease. Now, Önggür and Boro'ul, ride off and distribute food to all the people.' He then issued a [further] decree: 'When you arrange the seats to the right and left of the great [kumiss] flasks, attend to the food. Sit with Tolun in the centre [of the yurt], [facing us].' And he pointed out [their] seats to them.

[214] Then Chinggis Qahan said to Boroqul: 'You four, Shigi-qutuqu, Boroqul, Güchü, and Kököchü, [originated in] the camps of other people. My mother

found you on the ground,
took you on her lap,
and made you [her] sons.
She cared [for you]
and brought you up.
She pulled you up by the neck
and made you the equal of [other] people.
She pulled you all up by the collar bone
and made you the equal of [other] men.

496 For details, see Section 120.

She brought you up to become the shadows and companions of us, her sons. Who can tell how many benefits and services you rendered our mother in return for her bringing you up? Boroqul became a companion to me;

> on [our] swift expeditions on rainy nights
> you never let me hunger
> through the night.
> While battling the enemy,
> you never let me spend the night without broth.

In blighting the Tatars, the vengeful enemy that destroyed [our] forefathers and our fathers, we took revenge. We measured the Tatar people against the linchpin of a cart and killed them off. At the time of the killing, the Tatar Qargilshira escaped and became a bandit. Suffering and hungry, he entered [my] mother's yurt. "I seek alms," he said. "If you seek alms," he was told, "[then] sit over there." While he was sitting on the end of the bed, on the western side of [the yurt] next to the fire [by the door], Tolui, then five years old, came in from outside. [Tolui] ran [back towards the door], followed by Qargil-shira, who [snatched] the boy, tucked him under his arm, and left [the yurt]. As he went, he drew out his knife. Boroqul's wife Altani had been sitting in the eastern side of [my] mother's yurt. With [my] mother shouting "The boy is finished", Altani immediately ran out after her, caught up with Qargil-shira, seized the plaits of his hair [from] behind [with one hand], and, with the other [hand], gripped his hand as it was drawing forth the knife. At her tugging, he dropped the knife. Jetei and Jelme were at the back of the yurt killing a short-horned black ox by ripping its aorta from an incision [that they had made] in its back.[497] On [hearing] Altani's shouts, they came running over holding [their] axes, their fists red [with blood]. With knives and axes, they killed the Tatar Qargil-shira on the spot. Altani, Jetei, and Jelme argued together about [who] deserved most merit[498] for saving the boy's life. Jetei and Jelme said: "Had we not run

up so quickly and had we not killed him, what could Altani, a woman, have done? He would have harmed the boy. Surely the greatest merit is ours." Altani said: "Had you not heard my shouting, how would you have [known to] come? I myself ran, caught up with him, seized his plaits, and pulled the hand that was drawing out the knife. If the knife had not dropped, Jetei and Jelme would have arrived only after he had harmed the boy." After she had finished speaking, [it was agreed that] the greatest merit was Altani's. Because of her service [in saving] Tolui's life, Boroqul's wife became [as] a second cart-shaft to Boroqul. When Ögödei[499] was hit in the neck by an arrow and fell while we were fighting the Kereyits at the Qalqaljit[500] Sands, Boroqul dismounted and [stood] over him. [Boroqul] sucked out [Ögödei's] congealed blood and spent the night with him. The next morning, he placed [Ögödei] on a horse, [but Ögödei] was unable to sit up, [so] the [two] rode double. [Boroqul] clasped Ögödei from behind and repeatedly sucked out his clotted blood, [so that] the corners of [Boroqul's] mouth turned red. He saved Ögödei's life. [In return for] for the favour that my mother did in bringing him up, he served [me by saving] the lives of my two sons. Boroqul became a companion to me,

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497 The Chinese word *zhanlian* (*jemlen* in Mongol) was wrongly given in the text for *zhanlian (telen* in Mongol), a homophone in which the first Chinese character is written differently. *Telen alabu* means to kill an ox or sheep by ripping out its aorta, a method of slaughter used in the Ordos region. For details, see Eldengtei and Ardajab 1986, pp. 719–720, n. 15.

498 The highest merit' is my translation of *jüldü,* encountered in Section 13 (see page 41, note 93) meaning 'head, heart and lungs', i.e., the best part of an animal, or the part consecrated to the spirits. *Jüldü* also meant 'champion wrestler' in the Khorchin area, and the first animal caught on a hunt and presented to the leader of the hunt. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 304–305.

499 Ögödei (1186–1241) was Chinggis Qahan's third son and eventual successor. The incident referred to in this passage is narrated in Sections 172–173.

500 I.e., Qalaqaljit.

> never late in answer to my constant calls and summons.

Boroqul may commit [up to] nine crimes with impunity.' He also said: ['As a favour, we shall give our daughters and their descendants to him [and his descendants].']

[215] He also said: 'As a favour, we shall give our daughters and their descendants to him [and his descendants].'[501]

[216] Chinggis Qahan then addressed Old Man Üsün: 'Üsün, Qunan, Kökö-chös, and Degei never hid [or] concealed what they had seen and heard, [but always] informed me of it. They used to tell me their thoughts and opinions. [According to] Mongqol practice, a lord[502] may become a beki.[503] You are descended from the Elder Brother Ba'arin.[504] [In line with] the ways of the beki, let Old Man Üsün, who is [of the generation] above us, become a beki. After elevation to [the rank of] beki,

> he shall wear a white dress
> and ride a white gelding;
> [I] shall make him sit and have him served
> on the upper seat.

Let there be yearly and monthly bestowals[505] and let him live [in peace].'

[217] Chinggis Qahan said: 'Because [my] sworn brother Quyildar gave his life in battle before [any other man] had

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501 *sic.* Section 215 actually belongs in Section 242, where Chinggis Qahan gives various rewards to his mother and brothers.

502 *Noyan.*

503 A beki was either the chief of a clan or tribe or an empress or princess. Here, *beki* (from the Orkhon Turkish *bäg, -päk, -bäi*) meant a high-ranking officer. These beki wore white clothing and rode white horses, white being a colour of esteem. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 147.

504 Ba'aridai.

[even] opened his mouth, [his offspring] shall receive an orphan's recompense up to the seed of his seed.'

[218] Again, Chinggis Qahan said to Chaqan-qo'a's son, Narin-to'oril: 'Your father, Chaqan-qo'a, went to great lengths in fighting for me at Dalan-baljut. During the fighting, he was killed by Jamuqa. Let To'oril now receive an orphan's recompense for his father's service.' When told, To'oril said: 'If you favour me, [grant me this]: my Negüs kinsmen are scattered across other tribes. If you favour me, I would like to assemble my Negüs kinsmen.' In response, Chinggis Qahan issued a decree: 'If so, then assemble your Negüs kinsmen. And will you not take charge of a unit of one thousand men,[506] up to the seed of [your] seed?'

[219] Then Chinggis Qahan said to Sorqan-shira: 'When small, I was envied by Tarqutai-kiriltuq of the Tayichi'uts and his kinsmen. When I was captured you, Sorqan-shira, realised that I was envied by my kinsmen. Together with your sons, Chila'un and Chimbai, you had your daughter, Qada'an, look after [me]. After hiding [me], you released [me] and sent [me back]. In [my] dreams in the black night and in [my] breast in the bright day, I recalled the good that you had done to [me]. I kept thinking [of you], but you were slow in coming [over] to me from the Tayichi'uts. If I were now to show favour to you, what favour would you desire?' Sorqan-shira, who was with his sons, Chila'un and Chimbai, said: 'If you favour us, free the camps [on] the Merkits' land, [so that we] can camp along the Selengge. Any further favour I leave to Chinggis Qahan [to decide].' Chinggis Qahan responded: 'Let the camps in the Merkits' land [along] the Selengge be freed [for their] camps. I will let them carry quivers through the generations. I will let them drink the ceremonial wine. They shall be freedmen. They may commit [up to] nine crimes with impunity.' Chinggis Qahan also favoured both Chila'un and Chimbai: 'In light

505 For 'bestowals', see p. 194, n. 480.

506 See Choiji 1984, p. 300, n. 2.

of the words that you, Chila'un and Chimbai, [once] spoke, how will you be satisfied?[507] Chila'un and Chimbai, whatever is in your thoughts, speak it. If you lack anything, demand it. Do not speak through an intermediary. Tell me yourselves, with your own bodies and mouths, of your thoughts, ask me yourselves for whatever you lack.' Again, [he said]: 'Sorqan-shira, Badai, and Kishiliq, you [are] freedmen. When, as freedmen, you again gallop after enemies, you may take whatever booty you find; if you hunt wild beasts, take [as many as] you kill.' [Then] he [again] decreed: 'Sorqan-shira was merely a servant of the Tayichi'uts;[508] Badai and Kishiliq were merely the herdsmen of [Yeke-]Cherens. Now that they have, [with] my support, become quiver bearers, let them drink the ceremonial wine and enjoy [being] freedmen.'

[220] Chinggis Qahan then said to Naya'a: '[Once], Old Man Shirgötü, together with his sons Alaq and Naya'a, seized Tarqutai-kiriltuq and was drawing near to our [camp]. On the way, you arrived at Qutuqul-nu'u, where Naya'a said: "How can we seize our rightful Qan and forsake him [in this way]?" Unable to forsake [his Qan], [Naya'a] instead released him. Old Man Shirgötü came together with his sons Alaq and Naya'a, whereupon you, Naya'a-bilji'ür, said: "We seized our rightful Qan and were bringing [him to you], but we were unable to forsake him, [so] we released him. We have come to serve Chinggis Qahan. Had we come after laying hands on our rightful Qan, people would ask themselves how those who lay hands on their rightful Qan can ever again be trusted. We were unable to forsake our Qan." I approved of his words,

507 Although De Rachewiltz (vol. 23, p. 118) translates this clause as 'how can one ignore them', and (Cleaves 1982, p. 159) as 'how could I forget them', the actual meaning of *qandaju* (*qangqaju* in Section 145; qangqan in Section 177) is 'satisfying', from *qanda,* 'to be satisfied'. Most translators are puzzled by the Chinese interlinear note, *man li di* ('that which stands full'), but *man li di* would seem to be a mistake for *man zu di* ('satisfactory'). See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 165.

508 For *tödege (tödöge),* 'servant', see p. 120, n. 320.

[for] he had borne in mind the great principle [of loyalty] and had therefore been unable to forsake his rightful Qan. I said: "I shall assign him one task." [Since] I have given Bo'orchu charge of the ten thousand [households] of the right flank and Muqali, to whom I gave the title "Guy Ong", of the left flank, let Naya take charge of the ten thousand [households] of the centre.'

[221] Again, [Chinggis Qahan] said: 'Let Jebe and Sübe'etei form [units *off* one thousand for themselves from those [men] they have assembled.'

[222] He also had Degei the shepherd assemble those not registered in the census and put him in charge of one thousand.

[223] Then he said to Güchügür the carpenter: '[You] lack people. Mulqalqu of the Jadarans has been a constant companion [to you]. Let Güchügür and Mulqalqu consult together, assemble [men] from here and there, and form [a unit] of one thousand.'

[224] All those who had established the nation [with him] and had toiled [with him] he made commanders of a thousand households. He favoured those who deserved favour and praised those who deserved praise. After dividing [the people] into units of one thousand, he appointed the commanders of the thousands, the hundreds, and the tens. He divided [the people] into ten thousands and appointed the commanders of the ten thousands. He bestowed favour on them in a decree: 'I gave favour to you commanders of ten thousand and one thousand, [since you] merit such favour.' Then Chinggis Qahan issued a [further] decree: 'Formerly, I had eighty night-guards and seventy sentries [serving] in shifts. Now, by virtue of the strength of Eternal Heaven, my might and power have been increased by Heaven and Earth, and the whole nation is unified under my sole rule. Now choose sentries from the [units] of one thousand and enrol them in my service. Enrol night-guards, quiver bearers, and sentries to serve me, in units of a full ten thousand.' Then Chinggis Qahan issued a decree to the [units] of one thousand [regarding] the choice of guards and their

enrolment: ‘Enrol guards to serve us. Enrol the sons of the commanders of the ten thousands, the thousands, and the hundreds and the sons of the junior free people. Let those who are skilful, strong, handsome, and fit to serve at our side enrol to serve [us]. Enrol the sons of the commanders of the thousands. Let [each] bring ten companions [and let each companion] bring one younger brother.[509] Enrol the sons of the commanders of the hundreds. Let [each] bring five companions [and let each companion] bring one younger brother. Enrol the sons of the commanders of the tens and the sons of the common people. Let [each] bring three companions [and let each companion] bring one younger brother. Let each come from [his] original [unit] with a mount made ready, to reinforce [those] serving at our side. The ten companions [of] the sons of the commanders of one thousand shall be assembled [for them from] their original thousands and hundreds. Apart from [whatever] they may already own or have received [from] their fathers, and any men or geldings that they may have established [as their own], all [beasts and men] should be levied at a rate determined by us; once such a measure has been set, let it be applied. In the same way, apart from their personal possessions, give a levy of five companions [each] to the sons of the commanders of the hundreds and three companions [each] to the sons of the commanders of tens and to the sons of the common people.’ [Again] he decreed: ‘As soon as this our decree has reached the commanders of the thousands, the hundreds, and the tens and the many [common] people, [if] they transgress in spite of hearing it, let them be found guilty. Those enrolled to [serve] us who avoid working [their] shifts and are unwilling to serve at our side [because] they consider [such service] to be a hardship [shall be replaced by] others. Punish such men and consign them to a distant place, out

509 The elder brothers were ordered to take their younger brothers in case they themselves fell ill, and because if more than one of a commander’s sons served with the Qahan, the commander would be all the more likely to remain loyal.

of my sight.' He added: 'Do not discourage those who wish to serve at our side and who learn from being in our presence.'

[225] In accordance with Chinggis Qahan's decree, which chose the [night-guards] from among the thousands and, by the same decree, from among the sons of the commanders of the hundreds and the tens, the eighty night-guards of old became eight hundred. He said: 'Add to the eight hundred [to make] a full thousand.' He issued the following decree: 'Prevent none from entering into service as a night-guard.' He [then] said: 'Yeke-ne'ürin shall be head of the nightguards and take charge of one thousand.' He had previously chosen four hundred quiver-bearers. In choosing them, he said: 'Let Jelme's son Yisün-te'e lead the quiver-bearers and consult with Tüge's son Bügidei.' He [then] decreed: The quiver-bearers shall serve with the sentries, shift [by] shift. Yisün-te'e shall lead one shift [of] quiver-bearers and accompany [them]. Bügidei shall lead one shift [of] quiverbearers and accompany [them]. Horqudaq shall lead one shift [of] quiver-bearers and accompany [them]. Lablaqa shall lead one shift [of] quiver-bearers and accompany [them]. Let [these four men] lead their quiver-bearers to carry [their] quivers on each sentry shift. Let Yishün-te'e bring up [the number] of quiver-bearers [to] one thousand and be their leader.'

[226] In bringing up [the number of] sentries who had enrolled with Ögele-cherbi to one thousand, [Chinggis Qahan] said: 'Let Ögele-cherbi of the Bo'orchu clan take charge [of them].' He divided] the sentries [into units of] one thousand, and said: 'Let Buqa of the Muqali clan take charge of one thousand sentries, and let Alchidai of the Ilügei clan take charge of one thousand sentries.' [He added:] 'Let Dodai-cherbi take charge of one thousand sentries; let Dolqolqu-cherbi take charge of one thousand sentries. Let Chanai of the Jürchedei clan take charge of one thousand sentries and let Aqutai of the Alchi clan take charge of one thousand sentries. Let Arqai-qasar take charge of one thousand sentries [who are at the same time] chosen warriors. In times of peace, let them stand

guard. But on days of battle, let them stand to the fore as warriors.' He chose eight thousand men from among the thousands to become sentries [and to form] two thousands of night-guards and quiver-bearers. [Then] Chinggis Qahan issued the following decree: '[After] strengthening the ten thousand guards closest to us, let them become the main army.'

[227] Again, Chinggis Qahan issued a decree: 'Let the elders of the four shifts of sentries be appointed. Let Buqa, commander of a shift of guards, set the guards in order and join them; let Alchidai, commander of a shift of guards, set the guards in order and join them; let Dodai-cherbi, commander of a shift of guards, set the guards in order and join them; let Doqolqu-cherbi, commander of a shift of guards, set the guards in order and join them.' Having appointed the elders of the four shifts, he ordered the shifts to begin serving. [Then] he issued the following decree: '[At] the start of each shift, the shift's commander shall attend his post, muster those divided into shifts, and join the shift. After [standing guard for] three nights, [the units] shall relieve each other. If a guardsman abandons his shift, [his commander] shall instruct him [with] three [strokes of] the rod. If the same guard again abandons his shift, [the commander] shall instruct him [with] seven [strokes of] the rod. If the same man, despite [suffering] no physical illness and without obtaining the permission of his shift commander, abandons his shift for a third time, [simply because] he considers serving us [too] arduous, [his commander] shall instruct him [with] thirty-seven [strokes of] the rod and [then] consign him to a distant place.' And he said: The elders of the guards shall announce this decree to the guards at every third shift.[510] If the guards' elders fail to announce it, they shall be found guilty. If [any guards] transgress the principle of the decree even though it has been announced, and, by doing so, miss their shift, they shall be subjected to punishment.' And he said: 'Elders of the guards, do not, without my leave, reprimand guards who have entered into my service on an equal [footing] with you, simply because you are

[now] senior [to them]. If [any man] offends against the law, report him to me. If any men need to be executed, I shall execute them. If any men need to be beaten, I shall lie them down and beat them. If you lay hands [upon] my guards, who were [once] your equals, with hands or feet, or beat them with a rod, simply because you are [now] their seniors, you shall be repaid [in kind]. If you beat them with a rod, you yourself shall [be beaten with] a rod. If you [beat them with your fists], you yourself shall [be beaten with] fists.'

[228] Once again, Chinggis Qahan issued a decree: 'My guards are senior [in rank] to the leaders of thousands [of households serving] outside [the palace] and my guards' attendants are senior [in rank] to the outside leaders of hundreds and of tens. If an outside member of a thousand quarrel with my guards and [try] to equal and match them, [he]—the leader of a thousand—shall be punished.'

[229] Again, Chinggis Qahan issued a decree to the commanders of the shift guards: The quiver-bearers and the sentries shall join [their] shift and perform the day's duties in each direction, each [following] his own path. At the sun's setting, they shall yield to the night-guards and go outside to spend the night. At night, the night-guards shall stay with us. The quiver-bearers shall leave [their] quivers and the cooks shall leave [their] bowls and vessels with the night-guards before they go. Those who have spent the night outside—the quiver-bearers, the sentries and the cooks shall sit at the horse-tethering place until we have consumed our [morning] broth. As soon as [we] have consumed [our] broth, they shall report to the night-guard. [The night-guard] shall return the quivers to the quiver-bearers, their places to the sentries, and their bowls and vessels to the cooks. Each shift shall follow this same rule as it goes on duty.' And he said: 'After sunset, seize [any] man who crosses in front of or behind the palace. The night-guards shall hold him for the night. The following morning,

510 Probably the shift that fell within the hours of daylight.

they shall question him. When the night-guards change shift, those going on duty shall first submit their badges [of office]. At the change [of shifts], those leaving shall also first submit [their badges].' And he said: '[During] the night, the night-guards shall lie down around the palace, close by the door. Those nightguards who remain standing shall smash the heads of any people entering in the night and slash at their shoulders until they fall, [before] casting them away. If [people] arrive in the night with urgent messages, let them tell the night-guards. Let them stand together with the night-guards at the rear of the yurt and report [to us].' [Then] he said: No one shall sit on a seat on the upper side of the night-guards; without leave of the night-guards, no one shall enter; no one shall walk on the upper side of the night-guards; no one shall walk between the night-guards; [no one] shall ask the number [of] night-guards. The night-guards shall seize any man who walks on the upper side of them; they shall seize any man who walks behind them; [if] any man asks the night-guards' number, the night-guards shall take that person, together with the gelding [he has] ridden that day, the saddle, the bridle, and the clothes he is wearing.' [This is] how Eljigedei,[511] though trusted, was captured by the nightguards when he walked behind them.[512]

511 Eljigedei appears as Eljigidei in Section 278, where he is made senior commander of the sentries.

512 Little else is known about Eljigedei's capture by the nightguards.



CHAPTER TEN

[230] Chinggis Qahan said:

‘My elder night-guards,
who, in the clouded night,
lie down around my yurt
with its smoke-hole cover,
allowing me to sleep
soundly and peacefully,
enabled me to reach this throne.
My blessed night-guards,
lying down around my palace yurt
in the starry night,
allowing me to sleep
fearless in my bed,
enabled me to reach this high throne.
My loyal night-guards,
standing sleeplessly
around my lightly armoured yurt[513]
in the blustering snow,
the shivering cold,
and the pouring rain,
have eased my heart and
enabled me to reach this happy throne.

513 *Siltesü (iltesü),* the word in the text, means ‘tin-plate’. See Nei Menggu daxue Menggu yuwen yanjiushi 1976–1977, p. 171.

My trusted night-guards,
standing among the surging foe
around my felt-protected yurt,
guard me unblinkingly.
My vigorous night-guards
were quick to stand [by me]
when the birch-bark quivers rattled.
My night-guards, so swift to act,
were quick to stand [by me]
when the [enemy's] willow-wood quivers rattled.
My blessed night-guards,
call them [henceforth my] "elder night-guards".

Let the seventy sentries who enrolled with Ögöle-cherbi be [henceforth] known as "noble sentries." Let Arqay's warriors be known as "elder warriors".

Yisün-te'e, Bügidei, and the other quiver-bearers,
be known as "noble quiver-bearers".

[231] [Then Chinggis Qahan] said: 'My ten thousand personal guards, who [were] chosen from the ninety-five thousand [households] to [serve] my person, shall henceforth [be] deemed a legacy [to] my sons, who shall occupy the throne from generation to generation. Let them not be unhappy, and take care of them. Are not these ten thousand guards known as my strong and blessed ones?'[514]

[232] Again, Chinggis Qahan said: 'The night-guards shall take charge of the attendant girls of the palace, the houseboys, the camel herders, and the cow herders; let them [also] take care of the palace yurt-carts. They shall take care of the banners, drums, pikes,[515] and spears; let them also look after the bowls and vessels. They shall be responsible for our drink and food. They shall organise the

514 The guards were a reminder of their father to his sons; they had enabled him 'to reach this happy throne' (Section 230).

uncut meat and food and cook it. If food or drink be wanting, we shall look for it to the supervising night-guards. [Then] he said: The quiverbearers shall distribute the drink and food, [but] only with the permission of the supervising night-guards. They shall distribute the food to the night-guards before distributing it [to anyone else] And he said: The night-guards shall control those entering and leaving the palace-yurt. The door-keepers of the night-guards shall stand at the door of the yurt. Two night-guards shall bring in the great [kumiss] flasks And he said: The camp-masters from the night-guards shall travel [ahead] and set up the palace-yurt [Then] he said: 'When we go falconing and hunting, the night-guards shall join [us], [but] half of them shall remain with the carts

[233] Again, Chinggis Qahan said: 'Unless we ourselves go out to fight, the night-guards shall not go out to fight After [the night-guards] had been told this, they were issued with [a further] command: '[Any] cherbi in command [of the] soldiers who, because he is jealous of the night-guards, violates [my] decree and sends them out to war will be subject to punishment And he said: 'You may ask why the soldiers of the night-guards are not sent out [to war]. The reason is that their sole function is to guard my golden life. When we go falconing or hunting, they suffer together [with us]. As the palace's administrators, they look after the carts, [whether] at rest or on the move. Is it easy to guard my person overnight? Is it easy to look after the yurt-carts when the great camp is on the move and when it is at rest? That is why I say that they have double duties, [and duties] of many different [kinds], and why I say that they shall not go to war separately from us

[234] And again he issued a decree: 'Of the night-guards, [those] with judicial duties shall hear judgments together with Shigi-qutuqu And he said: '[Some] night-guards shall

515 De Rachewiltz translates *doro* as 'beneath' (vol. 26, p. 41), denoting the position of the spears. Actually, however, the word comes from *dörtü* and means 'a pike'. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 285, Jagchid-Sechin 1979, p. 349, n. 4.

look after the quivers, bows, armour, and equipment and distribute them. They shall assemble [some] of the geldings, load [them with] the [hunting] nets, and go And he said: 'Together with the stewards, [some] of the night-guards shall distribute the satin[516] And he said: 'When [the night-guards] have assigned camps for the quiver-bearers and the sentries, Yisün-te'e, Bükidei [Bügidei], and the other quiver-bearers, [together with] Alchidai, Ögöle, Aqutai, and the other sentries, shall serve on the right side of the palace And he said: 'Buqa, Dodai-cherbi, Dolqolqu-cherbi, Chanai, and the other sentries shall serve on the left side of the palace and the brave warriors of Arqai shall go on duty in front of the palace And he said: 'After taking care of the palace's yurtcarts, the night-guards shall serve next to the palace, on the left and right sides And he said: 'Dodai-cherbi shall remain in the palace and constantly assess the guards, i.e., the sentries on duty, the household boys around the palace, the horseherders, the shepherds, the camel-herders, the cattle-herders, and the palace [Then] he issued the following decree: 'Let Dodai-cherbi always serve at the rear of the palace,

grazing his herds on pastures
already grazed by the herds of others,
and burning cakes of dried horse-dung[517]

[235] [Chinggis Qahan] sent Qubilai-noyan to fight the Qarlu'uts, [but] Arslan Qan of the Qarlu'uts went to Qubilai and submitted to him. Qubilai-noyan took Arslan Qan to

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516 *A'urasun,* 'satin', also appears in Sections 248, 249, and 250. It has the additional meaning of 'property, effects'. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 85.

517 I.e., Dodai-cherbi will be so busy that he will have no time to look after himself properly. *Qoq,* translated here as 'left-over scraps', can also mean 'bad quality grass', 'chaff', 'refuse'; as a fuel, dried horse dung was considered inferior to dried cow dung. Dodai-cherbi's appointment was, nonetheless, an honour.

Chinggis Qahan and presented [Arslan] to [Chinggis Qahan] for an audience. Because [Arslan] had not fought, Chinggis Qahan favoured him and issued the following decree: 'We shall give a daughter [in marriage to him].'

[236] Sübe'etei-ba'atur had pursued the sons of Toqto'a the Merkit, Qutu, Chila'un, and others in an iron cart to join battle with them. He caught up with them at the Chui River, [where] he destroyed them and returned.

[237] Jebe pursued Güchülük Qan of the Naimans and caught up with him at Sariq-qun,[518] where he destroyed them and returned.

[238] The Idu'ut of the Ui'uds[519] sent emissaries to Chinggis Qahan. He sent the emissaries Atkiraq and Darbai with [this] petition:[520]

Like the clouds clearing
to reveal Mother Sun,
like the ice clearing
to reveal the river water,

I greatly rejoiced to hear the name and fame of Chinggis Qahan. If Chinggis Qahan favours me, if I [could] get

one link of [your] golden belt,
one thread of [your] scarlet garment,

I would become your fifth son and serve you. Such was his petition. Chinggis Qahan approved these words and replied: 'I shall give him [my] daughter and let him be [my] fifth son. Let the Idu'ut bring gold and silver, small pearls

518 'Yellow Cliff

519 The title Idu'ut (from *idi,* 'holy scripture', and *kyt,* 'happiness',) was used by kings and dukes of the Uighurs (here, 'Ui'ud') in the thirteenth century. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 112. The Idu'ut in question was Barchu-art-tegin (see De Rachewiltz 1971–1984, vol. 26, p. 62).

520 Darbai, used here as a proper name, meant 'conceited' in the Orkhon Turkish dialect. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 277.

and large pearls, brocades, damasks, and silks. The Idu'ut rejoiced because he had found favour. Bringing gold and silver, small pearls and large pearls, silks and brocades, damasks and satins, the Idu'ut came for an audience with Chinggis Qahan. Chinggis Qahan showed favour to the Idu'ut and gave [his daughter] Al-altun [to him].[521]

[239] In the Year of the Hare,[522] [Chinggis Qahan] had Jochi ride out with the soldiers of the right flank against the people of the forest, guided by Buqa. Quduqa-beki of the Oyirats had come to submit ahead of [the rest of] the ten thousand Oyirats. He sought out Jochi and led him to his own ten thousand Oyirats at Shiqshit, where he made them submit. [Then] Jochi made the Oyirat, Buriyad, Barqun, Ursut, Qabqanas Qangqas, and Tubas [peoples] submit. When he arrived at the ten thousand Kirgisüts, the Kirgisüt lords Yediinal, Aldi-er, and Örebek-digin[523] submitted and came [to join Jochi]. Taking white gerfalcons, white geldings, and black sables, they came for an audience with Jochi. Jochi made the nearby forest peoples, the Shibirs, Kesdiyims, Bayits, Tuqas, Telengs, Tö'eles, Tas, and Bajigids, submit to our side. He [then] took the Kirgisüt leaders of ten thousand and one thousand for an audience with Chinggis Qahan and [gave him] the white gerfalcons, the white geldings, and the black sables. [Chinggis Qahan] received Quduqa-beki of the Oyirats and bestowed favour on him, since he had submitted before [the rest of] the ten thousand Oirats and had led them to him. He gave Checheyigen to his son Inalchi and Jochi's daughter Qoluyiqan to Inalchi's elder

521 Al-altun means 'red gold'. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 90.

522 1207.

523 Yed-inal derives from the Orkhon Turkish *yedi,* 'lord, god' (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 309) and *inal,* 'emperor, qan' (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 107); Al-di'er, from the Orkhon Turkish *aldi'er,* 'prince, duke' (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 91); and Örebek-digin, from the Orkhon Turkish *orebek,* 'clan, kinship, social background' and the Orkhon Turkish title *digin,* i.e., 'clan chief' (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 127).

brother Törelchi.[524] He gave Alaqa-beki to [the ruler of] the Önggüts. Bestowing favour on Jochi, Chinggis Qahan said: 'You, the eldest of my sons, have left the yurt [for the first time].[525] Your journey has been smooth. Without losing or harming either men or geldings, you subdued the fortunate forest people and returned. I wish to bestow [these] people on you.

[240] He also sent Boro'ul-noyan to fight the Qori Tümads. On the death of Daiduqul-soqor, lord of the Tumad people, [Daiduqul-soqor]'s wife, Botoqui-tarqun,[526] had taken command of the Tumad[527] people. On arriving, Boro'ul and three others went off ahead of the main force. They were travelling along a trail in the dense forest in the late evening when they were taken unawares from behind by the [Tumad] watchmen, who blocked the trail. The [Tumad watchmen] captured and killed Boroqul-noyan. On hearing of Boroqul's death at the hands of the Tumads, Chinggis Qahan became very angry. He started to ride out against them himself, but Bo'orchu and Muqali counselled him not to do so. Instead, he appointed Dörbei-doqshin of the Dörbets to 'array the soldiers in strict order, pray to Eternal Heaven, and strive to make the Tumad people submit. After putting the soldiers in order, he sent decoys along the roads and trails guarded by [the enemy] soldiers and in the passes watched over by enemy guards to deceive them. He ordered [his] [regular] soldiers to [travel] by the paths created by the red bull[528] and [said] that any

524 Inalchi was an Orkhon Turkish title for 'prince' or 'duke' (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 107); Qoluyiqan meant 'daughter of a tribal god' (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 178) and could therefore perhaps mean 'goddess'; Törelchi is related to the Orkhon Turkish *töre,* 'prince, son of an emperor, duke' (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 270).

525 That Jochi had 'left the yurt' meant that he had gone out on his first serious campaign.

526 Botoqui-tarqun, here used as a proper name, comes from the Orkhon Turkish *botoqui,* 'violent', and the Mongol *tarqun,* 'fat'. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 154.

527 The Tumads were one of the forest clans.

soldier who gave up [would be] beaten. He made [each] man [who tried to give up] carry ten sticks on his back. [Then] he had the men's axes, adzes, saws, chisels, and [other] [tools and] weapons set in order. He made them cut, chop, and saw the trees that blocked the path created by the red bull, to [clear] a way [for the attack]. [His men] went up the mountain and suddenly [descended] [as though] through the top of the Tumad people's smoke holes, plundering them as they sat feasting.

[241] Earlier, Qorchi-noyan and Quduqa-beki had been captured by the Tumads and were [being held] at Botoquitarqun['s camp]. The reason Qorchi had been captured [was that] when [Chinggis Qahan] had decreed that [Qorchi] could take to wife thirty of the beautiful girls of the Tumad people, [Qorchi] had gone off to do so. Earlier, these people had submitted. [Now], however, they began to fight back and captured Qorchi-noyan. When Chinggis Qahan learned that Qorchi had been captured by the Tumads, he said that, in his opinion, Quduqa was familiar with the ways of the people of the forest. But when [Chinggis Qahan] sent [Quduqa], he too was captured. When he had finished subjugating the Tumad people, he gave one hundred Tumads [to Boroqul's family] [to compensate for] Boroqul's death. Qorchi took [his] thirty girls, and [Chinggis Qahan] gave Botoqui-tarqun to Quduqa-beki.

[242] Chinggis Qahan issued a decree: 'I shall divide the [subject] people[529] [between] [my] mother and sons and [my] younger brothers.' In so doing, he said: '[Among] those who suffered in gathering the nation together was [my] mother. Jochi is the eldest of my sons. Otchigin is my youngest brother. To [his] mother he gave ten thousand [of

528 Following the 'red bull' actually meant following animal tracks in general, and clearing them to allow the main army through. The animal in question was perhaps not a bull at all but a deer or stag, whose winter coat had turned reddish after the shedding of its summer wool. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 196.

the subject] people, [together with] Otchigin's share. His mother resented [this],[530] [but] said nothing. To Jochi he gave nine thousand people; to Cha'adai,[531] eight thousand; to Ögödei, five thousand; to Tolui, five thousand; to Qasar, four thousand; to Alchidai, two thousand; and to Belgütei, one thousand five hundred. Because [his paternal uncle] Da'aritai had gone with the Gereyits,[532] [he said]: '[Get] him out of my sight and put an end to him.' When he said this, Bo'orchu, Muqali, and Shigi-qutuqu said: '[To do so would be] as if to extinguish your own [hearth-]fire, as if to break up your own yurt. Your uncle is the sole reminder of your good [late] father, the [only one] remaining; how can you forsake him? He had no understanding [of what he did]—do not act [harshly]. Let him [stay with his family] and let the smoke [of their fires] rise up together from the camp of your good father's youth.' They spoke to him [in this way] until he began to sob. Moved to assent by the clear [counsel] of Bo'orchu, Muqali, and Shigi-qutuqu, he said '[Yes], let it be,' and fell silent.

[243] [Then Chinggis Qahan said:] 'Having given ten thousand people each to [my] mother and to Otchigin, I [now] appoint four men [for them] from among the leaders Güchü, Kököchü, Jungsai, and Qorqasun. I appoint three for Jochi—Qunan, Möngke'ür, and Kete. I appoint three for Cha'adai—Qarachar, Möngke, and Idoqudai.' Then Chinggis Qahan said: 'Cha'adai is obstinate and narrow minded. Köke-chos shall stay beside him morning and evening and advise him.' [He continued:] 'I appoint two for Ögödei Ilüge and Degei. I appoint two for Tolui—Jedei and Bala. I appoint Jekbe for Qasar and Cha'urqai for Alchidai.'[533]

[244] Father Mönglik [of the] Qongqotans had seven sons. The middle of the seven was Kököchü Teb-tenggeri.[534]

529 The 'subject people' means all the people.

530 In her opinion, she deserved more.

531 Cha'adai (1183–1242) was Chinggis Qahan's second son.

532 I.e., Kereyits.

These seven Qongqotans joined forces and beat Qasar. When Qasar knelt down to report to Chinggis Qahan that the seven Qongqotans had joined forces to beat him, Chinggis Qahan was angry about other [things]. With Qasar [still] in the middle of his report, Chinggis Qahan said angrily: 'You used [to say] that none could defeat you. How is it that have you been defeated [now]?' Qasar burst into tears, rose, and left. In his anger, Qasar did not visit [Chinggis Qahan] for three days. Teb-tenggeri [once] said to Chinggis Qahan: 'By the decree of Eternal Heaven, one augur concerning the Qan foretold that Temüjin should hold the nation [but] another foretold that Qasar should do so. If you do not launch a surprise attack on Qasar, there is no knowing [what will happen].' On being told this, Chinggis Qahan rode out [that] same night to capture Qasar. After he had left, Güchü and Kököchü told Mother [Hö'elün] that [Chinggis Qahan] had gone to capture Qasar. On learning [of Chinggis Qahan's expedition], Mother harnessed her white camel to the black wooden-framed covered cart [that] very night and travelled after them through the night, arriving at sunrise [at their camp]. Chinggis Qahan had tied Qasar's sleeves and removed his hat and sash and was interrogating him. Chinggis Qahan was surprised at Mother's arrival and frightened by her. Mother was angry. Getting down from the cart, she untied Qasar's bound sleeves and released him and gave him [back] his hat and sash. Unable to contain her anger, Mother sat cross-legged, pulled out her two breasts across her knees, and said: 'Have you seen these? They are the breasts you sucked. Those who make growling noises[535] have eaten their own afterbirth and cut their own birth cords. What has Qasar done? Temüjin could finish [the milk] of this one breast of mine; Qachi'un and Otchigin could not finish one breast between them. As for Qasar, he

533 These sixteen leaders were the advisors to Chinggis' mother, brothers, and sons.

534 Teb-tenggeri, 'all heavenly', was the highest Shamanist title.

could finish my two full breasts until my bosom sagged. He made my bosom comfortable and loose. So my knowledgeable Temüjin is skilful of mind and my Qasar is powerful and good at shooting. Because of this,

he shot at those
[who shot at him] and caused them to submit.
He shot long-distance [arrows]
at those who left
for fear of him, and caused them to submit.

Now that you think that you have finished off your enemies, you can no longer bear to look on Qasar.' After he had pacified Mother, Chinggis Qahan said: 'Mother, I made you angry.

Being afraid, I was afraid.
Being ashamed, I was ashamed.'

He [then] said: 'We will withdraw.' And [he and his men] withdrew. Without letting Mother know, he secretly took [away] Qasar's people and gave Qasar [only] one thousand four hundred people. When Mother found out, the thought of it [killed her] prematurely. Hence her quick [death]. Jebke of the Jalayirs took fright and escaped to Barqujin.[536]

[245] After that,[537] the 'people of the nine tongues'[538] gathered around Teb-tenggeri, greatly outnumbering those at Chinggis Qahan's horse-tethering place. As they were assembling, the people subject to Temüge-otchigin [also] joined Teb-tenggeri. Otchigin-noyan sent an emissary

535 In the text, *qadalun da'un* is a mistake for *qadaran da'un. Da'un* means 'noise, sound'. *Qadaran* means the growling noise made by animals. See Dorontib 1979, pp. 280–281, n. 6.

536 See Section 243, which explains how Jebke was assigned as an adviser to Qasar by Chinggis. Chinggis' anger at Qasar therefore frightens Jebke.

named Soqor to request [the return] of those who had gone. Tebtenggeri said to Soqor: 'You and that other woman, Otchigin, now have an ambassador.'[539] After beating [Otchigin's] emissary Soqor, he made him return on foot, carrying his own saddle. The day after [hearing that] his emissary Soqor [had been] beaten and sent back on foot, Otchigin himself went to Teb-tenggeri and said: 'When I sent my emissary Soqor, you beat him and sent him back on foot. Now I have come to request [the return of] my people. After he had finished saying this, the seven Qongqotans surrounded Otchigin on all sides and said: 'You were right to send your emissary Soqor. Otchigin, afraid of being seized and beaten, said: 'I was wrong to send my emissary.' The seven Qongqotans [then] said: 'If you were wrong, then kneel down and plead. He knelt down behind Teb-tenggeri and his own people were not returned to him. Early the next morning, before Chinggis Qahan had risen from his bed, he entered [his tent] and, after crying, knelt down and said: The "people of the nine tongues" have gathered around Teb-tenggeri and I sent an emissary named Soqor to request Teb-tenggeri [to return] my own subject people to me. They beat my emissary Soqor and sent him back on foot, carrying his saddle on his back. When I myself went to make [my] request, I was surrounded on all sides by the seven Qongqotans. They made me plead and kneel down behind Teb-tenggeri.' Before Chinggis Qahan could utter a sound, Lady Börte sat up in bed, covering her breast with the edge of the quilt. Seeing Otchigin cry, she [herself] shed tears and said:

537 In 1210.

538 'Nine', an auspicious number, also means 'many'. For a note on who these people might be, see De Rachewiltz (vol. 26, pp. 80–81). See also Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 307–308.

539 This is a sardonic comment by Teb-tenggeri. The word *jirin* in the text, 'two', is generally used to denote a pair of female creatures. Teb-tenggeri is insulting them as 'ladies', and implying that they have an exaggerated idea of their own importance. *Elchi,* 'ambassador', was an extremely high title. Teb-tenggeri was ridiculing the two men.

'What are the Qongqotans doing? Recently they joined forces to beat Qasar. Why have they now made Otchigin kneel down behind them—what is the reason [for] their action? They will secretly harm your younger brothers, who are like cypresses and pines. Later,

> when your body, like an old and withered tree,
> comes falling down,
> who will they then let govern
> your people,
> who are as tangled hemp?
> When your body, like [the stone base of] a pillar,[540]
> comes tumbling down,
> who will they then let govern
> your people,
> who are as [a flock of] red-polls?

How will those who would secretly harm your younger brothers, who are as cypresses and pines, allow my three or four small "bad ones"[541] to govern while they grow? What did the Qongqotans do? They have done this to your younger brothers—how can you sit still?' After saying this, Lady Börte began to cry. At these words of Lady Börte, Chinggis Qahan said to Otchigin: 'Teb-tenggeri is now on his way. Do whatever you are able. The course of action is yours to decide. At that, Otchigin got up, wiped away his tears, and left. He forewarned three strong men and lined them up. Soon afterwards, Father Mönglik came, together with his seven sons. The seven entered. Teb-tenggeri sat down on the right side of the [kumiss] flasks. Otchigin seized Teb-tenggeri's collar and said: 'Yesterday you made

540 The word *tolu* in the text, pronounced *toola* in the Dawr dialect, occurs in the phrase *toola choloo* (in which *choloo* means stone). When hunters cooked their food while out hunting, they placed their cooking vessel on three stones arranged in a triangle around the fire. Those three stones were known as *toola choloo.*

541 I.e., sons.

me plead. Let us try our strength [against each other].' Seizing [Teb-tenggeri's] collar, he pulled him towards the door. Teb-tenggeri faced Otchigin, seized his collar, and wrestled with him. As they wrestled, Teb-tenggeri's hat fell behind the hearth-fire. Father Mönglik took the hat, smelled it, and tucked it into his bosom. Chinggis Qahan said: 'Go out and see who is the strongest wrestler.' As Otchigin left through the door, pulling Tebtenggeri [behind him], the three forewarned strong men [stood] facing Teb-tenggeri on the threshold. They seized him, pulled him from [the yurt], broke his spine, and threw him behind the [row of] carts to the east [of the yurts]. Otchigin came [back] in and said: 'Teb-tenggeri made me plead, [but] when I challenged him to compete, he was unwilling to do so. [Instead,] he made an excuse and lay down. He was [only] a short-term companion.' After [Otchigin] had said this, Father Mönglik, realising [what had happened], shed tears and said:

'From the time when the huge earth
was a [mere] clod,
from the time when the oceans and rivers
were narrow streams,

I have been your companion.' As he spoke, his six Qongqotan sons blocked the door and stood around the hearth-fire rolling up their sleeves. Afraid of being hemmed in, Chinggis Qahan said: 'Make way. Allow me to leave. As soon as he left, the quiver-bearers and sentries surrounded him. When he saw that they had thrown Teb-tenggeri['s body] beyond the carts to the east [of the yurts] after breaking his spine, he had a small grey tent fetched from behind [the yurts] and set up over Teb-tenggeri. [Then] he said: 'Bring in transport so that we can move out.' They then set out.

[246] After putting Teb[-tenggeri's corpse] inside the small tent, they covered the smoke-hole and wedged shut the door. [Chinggis Qahan] set people to guard [the tent]. At dawn on the third night, [however], [Teb-tenggeri] opened

the smokehole and left through it, together with his body. An inspection of [the yurt] confirmed that it was indeed Tebtenggeri who had left through [the smoke-hole]. Chinggis Qahan said: 'Because Teb-tenggeri laid hands and feet on my younger brothers and spread baseless slanders among my younger brothers, he was not loved by Heaven and his life, together with his body, has been carried off.' Then Chinggis Qahan reprimanded Father Mönglik: '[Since] you failed to curb your sons' natures, they came to think themselves [my] equal. [As a result,] you risked Teb-tenggeri's head. When I realised your nature, I should have done for you as I did for Jamuqa, Altan, Quchar, and the rest.' After he had finished reprimanding Father Mönglik, he said: 'If in the evening I break [a promise] made in the morning or if in the morning I break [a promise] made [the previous] evening, I would certainly be talked about and shamed. Earlier I made a promise to you.[542] [Let that] be enough.' He then calmed down and showed favour to [Father Mönglik]. 'Had you reined in your overweening nature, who could have equalled your descendants?' he asked. After he had disposed of Teb-tenggeri, the morale of the Qongqotans collapsed.

542 Chinggis Qahan's promise to Father Mönglik is recounted in Section 204.



CHAPTER ELEVEN

[247] After that, in the Year of the Sheep,[543] Chinggis Qahan rode out against the Kitad[544] people. Taking Wujiu, he crossed the Fox[545] Pass and seized Söndeiwu, sending Jebe and Güyigünek-ba'atur [ahead] as vanguards.[546] On arriving at Chabchiyal,[547] [Jebe and Güyigünek-ba'atur found] that guards had been posted on the Chabchiyal Pass. Then Jebe said: 'We shall lure them into moving.

543 1211.

544 The Kitad (or Kitat) people were inhabitants of northern China.

545 *Hünegen.*

546 Wujiu, i.e., Fuzhou (also known to the Mongols as Qara balqasun, 'Black City'), is situated in Zhangbei to the north of Kalgan in northern China. The Fox *(hünegen)* Pass is in Wanquan to the northwest of Kalgan (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 198–9). Between 1644 and 1911, the Mongols called Söndeiwu Bayan Süme ('Rich monastery') (see Jagchid-Sechin 1979, p. 374, n. 4); the Chinese called it Xuande zhou until 1262, when it became Xuande fu. See Irenchin 1984, p. 81. Today, it is known as Xuanhua xian; it is located to the southeast of Kalgan. This is Güyigünek's first and last mention in the History. Güyigünek is the name in the Orkhon Turkish dialect of a mouse-catching falcon; its scientific name is buteo vulgaris (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 208–209).

547 The Chabchiyal (called Juyongguan in Chinese) was a famous pass northwest of Beijing. A long narrow valley separated the plain around Beijing from the Kalgan Plateau and was guarded by a famous gate, mentioned later in the passage.

When they come [after us], we shall fight them.' He then turned back. The Kitad soldiers decided to pursue him. As they drew nigh, they choked the valleys and mountains. On reaching the provincial capital, Söndeiwu, Jebe reined in [his horses] and turned back. He attacked the advancing enemy, which was growing [ever] bigger, and overcame them. Chinggis Qahan, following closely behind with the main body of [his] army, forced the Kitads to withdraw and overcame the powerful and courageous soldiers of the Jüyins of the Kitans and the Jins, slaughtering them until they were piled [like] rotten logs all the way to Chabchiyal. Jebe took the gate of Chabchiyal. Chinggis Qahan, after taking the passes and crossing them, set up camp at Shira-dektür.[548] He [himself] surrounded and attacked Jungdu, [549] [at the same time as] sending [his] soldiers to surround and attack various towns and cities. He sent Jebe to attack the city [of] Dongchang.[550] After reaching Dungchang, Jebe was unable to mount an [effective] attack so he returned. He went to a place six days' [journey from Dungchang],[551] [so that the enemy] no longer paid attention to him. He then reined in his horses and returned. Travelling through the night, and leading extra horses, [he and his men] arrived while [the enemy] was [still] off guard and took Dungchang.[552]

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548 Shira-dektür ('Yellow Terrace'), known as Longhutai by the Chinese, was located between Nankou and Beijing. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 250.

549 Jungdu, the Mongolian form of Zhongdu, became Dadu under the Mongol Empire. It is now Beijing. See Jagchid-Sechin 1979, pp. 375–376, n. 9.

550 Dongchang was Dongjing, now Mukden in Manchuria. Jebe was sent there to assist a high-ranking Kitad official, Yelü liuke (1165–1220), who was in the process of going over to the Mongol side. See Li Zefen 1970, pp. 267–275, 336–338; Jagchid-Sechin 1979, p. 376, ns. 10 and 11. According to other sources, the city did not acquire the name Dongchang until 1276. See Irenchin 1984, p. 81. In the text, it appears as 'Dongchang Balaqasun'. *Balaqasun,* 'city', derives from the Dawr dialect word *balaga,* 'mud'. In the past, cities were often made of mud.

[248] After taking Dungchang, Jebe returned to join Chinggis Qahan. With Jungdu under siege, the Altan-qan's great lord, Ongging-chinsang,[553] addressed the following petition to the Altan-qan: The destiny of Heaven and Earth ordains that the time has come for a change in [the dynasty that occupies] the great throne. The Mongqols have advanced in strength, overcoming the best soldiers of our powerful and courageous Juyin of the Qara-kitads and of the Jürchets,[554] slaughtering them all. They have also captured our trusty Chabchiyal [Pass]. If we again array our soldiers and send them forth and if the Mongqols again overcome them, [our men] will scatter to their various cities. If we assemble them against their will, they will become our enemies and [cease to be] our friends. Altan-qan, if you favour us, submit for the time being to the Mongqol's qan and consult with him. If, after consultations, the Mongqols withdraw, we can again negotiate with them with other aims. The men and geldings of the Mongqols are said to find [this] place unsuitable and are becoming feverish. Let us give their qan a princess and distribute generous quantities of gold, silver, satin, and [other] goods among the men of [his] army. How can we tell whether or not they will accept this proposal of ours?' The Altan-qan approved these words of Ongging-chingsang, saying: 'So be it.' He submitted to Chinggis Qahan and presented him

551 De Rachewiltz, citing a source, says that a day's journey was about 45 kilometres, making a total of around 270 kilometres. See De Rachewiltz 1971–1984, vol. 30, p. 108.

552 In reality, Dungchang fell in January 1213. For details, see Saishiyal 1987, pp. 752–753, n. 37. Dungchang was in China's Shandong Province.

553 Ongging-chingsang (Wangjing Chengxiang in Chinese) was more commonly known as Wanyan Che'enghui or Wanyan Fuxing. For details, see Jagchid-Sechin 1979, p. 377, n. 2; Li Zefen 1970, p. 255.

554 The Jürchets established the Jin Dynasty (1115–1234). Their first emperor was A ku-ta (Aqutai). See Dorontib 1979, p. 298, n. 6. Thereafter, Aqutai became the name of every Jin emperor. Aqutai appears in Sections 250 and 251.

with a princess named Güngjü.[555] From Jungdu, he sent the men of [Chinggis Qahan's] army gold, silver, satin, and [other] goods, [as much as] they thought that they could carry. He sent Ongging-chingsang to Chinggis Qahan. Ongging-chingsang submitted to Chinggis Qahan, who agreed to the [Altan-qan's] proposal. [Chinggis Qahan] ordered the soldiers setting siege to the various towns to return, [so] they withdrew. Onggingchingsang accompanied Chinggis Qahan to the provincial capitals of Mojiu[556] and Wujiu and [then] returned.[557] Our soldiers loaded [as much of] the satin and [other] goods as they could carry, tied the loads with silk, and left.

[249] During that same expedition, [Chinggis Qahan also] visited the Qashin people. After [Chinggis Qahan's] arrival, Burqan-qan of the Qashin[558] people said [to him]: 'I shall submit and serve you [by] becoming your right-hand [army].' He gave Chinggis Qahan a princess named Chaqa.

Burqan-qan also said: 'After hearing Chinggis Qahan's name and learning of his fame, we were in awe. Now your mighty person has come to us, and we are awed by [your] might. Being awed, we Tangqut people will become your right hand and serve you.' And he said: To serve you, we, the city people, possess

555 Actually, *güngjü* means 'princess' *(gongzhu* in Chinese). The woman's real name was Qiguo (see Dorontib 1979, p. 294, n. 17; Li Zefen 1970, p. 266).

556 Mozhou in Chinese.

557 Chinggis Qahan returned north and spent the sixth lunar month at the lake of Dal-nur (Tal-nu'ur) (see Li Zefen 1970, pp. 292–293). Wujiu was mentioned earlier, in Section 247; Mojiu (Mozhou) was also known as Machi in Chinese (see De Rachewiltz 1971–1984, vol. 30, pp. 112–115).

558 The Qashin people are discussed on p. 126, n. 337. Burqan-qan means 'Buddha ruler'; the Qashin were Buddhist. The earlier occurrences of the word *burqan* in the History (e.g., in Section 9) are Shamanistic, not Buddhist. Qashin means 'west of the [Yellow] River' (or Qatun Gol, 'Queen's River').

established camps and
solidly built cities.

As [your] companions,

when [you] execute a swift campaign,
when [you] fight a sharp battle,

[we] will be unable to keep up with [your] swift campaign or to fight the sharp battle. [But] if Chinggis Qahan favours us, we Tangqut people

wish to present you with many camels,
reared in the shelter of tall broom-grass[559]
and given as a levy.
We will weave woollen cloth and make satin
to give [to you].
We will train falcons,
gather them together,

and send the pick of them [to you].' So he petitioned, and he kept his word. He levied so many camels from the Tangqut people that it was impossible to drive [any more of them]. He took them [to Chinggis Qahan] and gave [them to him].

[250] During that same expedition, Chinggis Qahan made the Altan-qa'an of the Kitad people submit and took large quantities of satin [from him]. He made Burqan of the Qashin people submit and took large numbers of camels [from him]. During that same expedition, in the Year of the Sheep,[560] Chinggis Qahan made the Altan-qan of the Kitads, named Aqutai, submit. He [also] made Iluqu-burqan of the Tangqut people submit.[561] He [then] returned and set up camp on the Sa'ari Steppe.

[251] After that, [in the Year of the Dog,[562]] Chinggis Qahan again rode out against the Kitad people, [for]

559 Lasiagrostis splendens.

Jubqan and many [of] our other emissaries sent to Jeu-gon[563] to seek allegiance had met with obstructions by Aqutai, the Altanqa'an of the Kitad people. As he rode out, he said: 'Given that they have completely submitted, why do they obstruct the emissaries that [I] sent to Jeu-gon?'[564] Chinggis Qahan himself headed for the Tunggon Pass, while [sending] Jebe by way of Chabchiyal. Aware that Chinggis Qahan had [gone] by way of the Tunggon Pass, the Altan-qan put Ile,[565] Qada,[566] and Höbögetür in charge of the soldiers and selected the [best] of them. He organised the Red Jackets[567] into a vanguard and told them: 'Struggle [for] the Tunggon Pass and do not let them cross the ridge.' He quickly sent Ile, Qada, and Höbögetür [to join] the soldiers. Heading for the Tongguan Pass, [Chinggis Qahan found so many] Kitad soldiers that the ground could [hardly] bear the weight of them. Chinggis Qahan fought Ile, Qada, and Höbögetür and forced Ile and Qada to give ground. [When] Tolui and Chügü-gürgen[568] arrived, they attacked from the flanks and forced the Red

560 1211.

561 For Aqutai, see p. 235, n. 554. For Iluqu-burqan, see p. 261, n. 645. *Iluqu* means victorious.

562 1214.

563 Jeu-gon (Zhao Guan) was the Mongolian name for the reigning Song Dynasty emperor Ningzong (1195–1224). *Jeu-, jü-* (e.g., Jüyin in Sections 53, 247, 248, and 266), *jau-,* (e.g., Ja'ut-quri in Section 134), *chau-* (e.g., Cha'ut-quri in Section 179), *and jaqu-*(e.g., Jaqut in Section 281) all mean 'frontier' or 'outsider' and were applied indiscriminately by the Mongols. *Gon* (Guan) referred to the emperor of the Song Dynasty (1127–1278) in southern China. For further details, see De Rachewiltz 1971–1984, vol. 30, pp. 119–120.

564 Zhao Guan.

565 Yile-pu-a.

566 Wanyan Hada.

567 A top fighting force, so called because of the red capes *(degelen)* worn by its members. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 281. According to some scholars, these Red Capes were perhaps members of the Jin Dynasty's Dare-to-Die Corps.

Jackets to retreat. They forced Ile and Qada to give ground and overcame them, slaughtering the Kitads until they piled up like rotten logs. Seeing that his soldiers had been slaughtered, the Altan-qan escaped from Jungdu and went to the city [of] Namging.[569] His remaining soldiers, who began to grow thin and die, ate human flesh. Chinggis Qahan told Tolui and Chügügürgen: 'You have done well.' He bestowed special favours on them.

[252] After camping at Qoshiwu,[570] Chinggis Qahan pitched his tents on the Shira Steppe[571] of Jungdu. Jebe broke down the gate at Chabchiyal and forced the soldiers guarding Chabchiyal to give ground. [Then] he came to join Chinggis Qahan. Before leaving Jungdu, the Altan-qan appointed Qada as *liu-shiu*[572] in Jungdu. Chinggis Qahan had an inventory made of Jungdu's gold, silver, goods, satins, and other objects and sent Önggür the cook, Arqai-qasar, and Shigi-qutuqu [there]. As the three men approached, Qada went out from Jungdu to receive them face to face, taking with him some gold-embroidered and patterned satins. Shigi-qutuqu told Qada: 'Formerly these goods from Jungdu, together with Jungdu [itself], belonged to the Altan-qan. Now Jungdu belongs to Chinggis Qahan. How can you steal Chinggis Qahan's goods and satins and bring them [here] to give [to us] behind his back? I will not take them.' Shigi-qutuqu refused to take them, [but] Önggür the cook and Arqai both took them. After making an inventory of Jungdu's goods and other things, the three returned. Chinggis Qahan asked Önggür, Arqai, and Qutuqu: 'What did Qada give you?' Shigi-qutuqu replied: 'He brought out some

568 This word means son-in-law.

569 Namging (Nanjing) is present-day Kaifeng in Henan Province, central China. See Li Zefen 1970, p. 263, map 9.

570 Qoshiwu (Hexiwu) was to the northeast of Wuqing in Hebei Province. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 181.

571 The Shira Steppe was said to lie to the northwest of Jungdu. See Saishiyal 1987, p. 749, n. 32.

572 Vice-regent.

goldembroidered and patterned satins. [However,] when he gave them [to us], I said: "Formerly Jungdu belonged to the Altan-qan. Now it belongs to Chinggis Qahan. How can you, Qada, steal Chinggis Qahan's goods and give them [to us] behind his back?" I refused to take them, but both Önggür and Arqai took [the goods] that he gave [them].' Then Chinggis Qahan angrily rebuked both Önggür and Arqai. He told Shigi-Qutuqu, 'You kept the great principle in mind,'[573] and bestowed great favours on him. [Then] he issued the following decree: 'Will you not become my seeing eyes, my listening ears?'

[253] After entering Namging, the Altan-qan submitted and abased himself. He sent his own son, Tenggeri,[574] to Chinggis Qahan with one hundred companions to act as sentries. With the Altan-qan [thus] subjugated, Chinggis Qahan said: 'We will withdraw.' As they were withdrawing through the Chabchiyal [Pass], he sent Qasar with the soldiers of the left-hand [army] to skirt the ocean, and told him: 'Set up camp at the city [of] Beiging[575] and cause the city to submit. [Then] continue through [the land of] Wuqanu[576] of the Jürchets. If Wuqanu wants to fight you, attack him. If he submits, pass through his border cities and go along the banks of the Ula and Na'u.[577] Cross the Tawur River upstream and come to join [me] at the main base camp.' He sent three of the [other] commanders, Jürchedei, Alchi, and Tolun-cherbi, to accompany Qasar. Qasar caused the city [of] Beiging, Wuqanu of the Jürchets, and [various other] cities along the way to submit. He then came upstream along the Tawur River and [back] to the main base camp, where he dismounted.[578]

573 The principle of obedience to the Qahan.

574 There is no record, either in the Jin History or the Yuan History, of the sending of this son.

575 Beiging (or Beijing), 'Northern Capital', was located in Manchuria, in Qarchin territory. It became Daning Lu in 1270. See Jagchid-Sechin 1979, pp. 384–385, n. 2; Li Zefen 1970, p. 293, map 10.

[254] After that, one hundred of Chinggis Qahan's emissaries under Uquna were obstructed and killed by the Sarta'ul people.[579] Chinggis Qahan said: 'How can my Golden Rein [of authority] be severed by the Sarta'ul people?' And he said: 'Let us ride out against the Sarta'ul people,

to gain vengeance and
to seek revenge

[for the deaths of] Uquna and my hundred emissaries.' As he was about to ride out, Yisüi-qatun petitioned Chinggis Qahan. He said: 'Qahan,

You are thinking of crossing high ridges
and fording wide rivers,
of executing distant campaigns
and pacifying your many nations.

[But] no creature is born eternal.

When your body, like an old and withered tree,
comes crashing down,
to whom will you bequeath your people,
like tangled hemp?
When your body, like the stone base of a pillar,
comes tumbling down,
to whom will you bequeath your people,
like [a flock of] red-polls?

576 Actually, Wuqana (Puxian Wannu), not the Altan-qan, sent his son to Chinggis Qahan.

577 The Ula and the Na'u are the Songari and Na'un (Onon) Rivers. Ula meant 'river' in Manchu (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 120).

578 This happened in 1213.

579 This incident happened in either late 1216 or early 1217. For details, see Saishiyal 1987, pp. 874–875, n. 4.

Which of your “four steeds”, the sons born [to you], will you nominate? Your sons, your younger brothers, the commoners, and my humble self realise [that this is an important issue]. I have explained our understanding [of the matter]. Your decree shall decide [the issue].’ Chinggis Qahan replied to the petition with the following decree: ‘Although she is [merely] a lady, Yisüi’s words are beyond correction. None of you younger brothers or sons—Bo’orchu, Muqali, and the others - have spoken along such lines. I, too,

having failed to follow [my] forefathers,[580]
forgot [this].
Untroubled by [the fear of] death,
I slept.[581]

Jochi, my eldest son, what do you say?’ [But] before Jochi could utter a sound, Cha’adai said: ‘By telling Jochi to speak, are you saying that you nominate him [as your successor]? How could we be governed by a bastard of the Merkits?[582] Jochi rose, seized Cha’adai’s collar, and said: ‘[Our] father the Qahan has never informed me that I am [any] different [from you]. Why do you discriminate against me? In what way are you more able [than I]? Only in terms of stupidity are you perhaps superior. If you beat me in long-distance arrow shooting, I will cut off my thumb and cast it away. If you defeat me in wrestling, I will not rise from the ground where I fall. Let [our] father the Qahan decree [which one of us shall succeed him]!’ Jochi and

580 Chinggis means that being the first Qahan to rule over the Mongol nation, he has no precedent to follow in the matter of his succession.

581 Chinggis means that he became complacent.

582 Cha’adai intimates that Jochi’s father is not Chinggis Qahan but one of the Merkits who abducted Börte, Chinggis’ wife. See Sections 101 and 104–111.1 have translated *chul,* ‘genuine’, and *ulja’ur* (*walja’ur* in Dawr Mongol), ‘windfalls’, as ‘bastard’. The suffix *-r* is an archaic plural marker.

Cha'adai stood holding each other by the collar, while Bo'orchu pulled on Jochi's arm and Muqali pulled on Cha'adai's arm. Chinggis Qahan [himself] sat listening in silence. Then Kökö-chös, standing to the left [of them], said: 'Why are you in such a hurry, Cha'adai? Of all his sons, the Qahan your father's expectations were of you. Before you [sons] were born,

the starry heavens
turned once,
and many people fought each other.
Without [pausing] to enter their beds,
they took advantage of each other.
The surface of the globe
rolled,
and the whole people was at strife.
Without [pausing] to lie beneath their quilts,
they fought each other.
In those days [when your mother joined the Merkits],
people [were forced, in the end,] to fight each other
without wishing to.
People betrayed
without wishing to,
[and in the end were forced] to fight each other.
People acted,
although not in love,
[and in the end were forced] to kill each other.

Speaking [as] you do, you will congeal the buttery heart of your mother, the wise lady, you will sour [her] milky heart.

From [her womb's] warmth
did [the two of] you not happen to be born
from the self-same belly?[583]
From [her womb's] heat
did [the two of] you not happen to emerge
from a single womb?

If you cause your mother, who bore you from her heart,
to blame you,
she will cool [towards you].
If you [try] to appease her,
it will not work.
If you cause your mother, who bore you from her belly,
to grumble,
her pain [will grow],
and [any attempt] by you to lessen it
will fail.
When the Qan, your father,
founded the entire nation,
he tied his black head to the saddle strap
and poured his black blood into a leather flask;
[but] his black eyes never blinked.
He did not lay his flat ear on a pillow,
[but] made a pillow of his sleeves
and spread out his skirts [to form a mattress].
He had only his own spit to drink,

and [ate] meat [caught] between his teeth at night.[584]

He struggled forwards until the sweat of his brow reached the soles [of his feet], and until the sweat of his soles had soaked up towards his brow. While he persisted in [his] endeavours, your mother suffered together [with him].

Wearing her high hat upright,

583 The interlinear Chinese note gives ‘suddenly’ rather than ‘accidentally’, but I favour the latter (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 168). Kökö-chös does not mean that Jochi and Cha’adai were born by accident, but that it was not planned that they should be brothers. Since they were brothers, however, they should accept the fact.

shortening [her skirts] with her sash,
wearing her high hat tightly,
and tying her sash firmly
she reared you.
Whenever she swallowed,
she gave you half her [food].
Her throat choking,
she gave you all her [food],
and went hungry.
Pulling you up by your shoulders,
[she asked:] “How [shall I] make you equal
with [other] men?”
Pulling you up by your necks,
she asked: “How [shall I] make you equal
with [other] people?”
Cleaning your bodies
and forcing you to lift your heels,
she made you reach up to men’s shoulders
and to the rumps of geldings.

Is she not now thinking that she wants the best for you? Our wise lady had a heart

as bright as the sun,
as wide as a lake.’

[255] At this, Chinggis Qahan said: ‘How can you speak in this way about Jochi? Is not Jochi the eldest of my sons? From now on, never speak [of him] again in such a way.’ So he decreed. Hearing these words, Cha’adai smiled and said: ‘I do not consider Jochi’s strength to be a skill.

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584 This passage means that the Qan was constantly in mortal danger.

[Game] killed by mouth
cannot be loaded [on a horse];
[game] slaughtered by words
cannot be skinned.[585]

Jochi and I are the eldest of [your] sons. We wish in partnership to serve the Qahan [our] father. Let us cleave asunder whichever [of us] shirks [his duty], let us slash the heels of whichever [of us] lags behind. Ögödei is peaceful let us decide on him. Ögödei is close to the Qan [our] father. If the Qan initiates him in the teachings of the great hat,[586] [the choice] will surely be appropriate.' Hearing these words, Chinggis Qahan asked: 'What do you say, Jochi? Speak.' Jochi replied: 'Cha'adai has spoken [for me]. Cha'adai and I wish to serve you in partnership—let us decide on Ögödei.' Chinggis Qahan issued the following decree: 'Why should you [go] so far as to act in partnership? Mother Earth is wide and [her] rivers and waters are many. By extending the camps [among you], [so that] each of you rules over [different] lands, I shall separate you.' He added: 'Jochi and Cha'adai, keep to your words.

Do not let people laugh at you,
do not let others ridicule you.

Formerly both Altan and Quchar made this promise, but they did not keep it. So what was to be done? And what became of them? Now, along with you, I shall divide [some] of the descendants of both Altan and Quchar. Seeing them, how could you be negligent?' He [then] said: 'What do you say, Ögödei? Speak.' Ögödei replied: 'When told by the Qahan to speak, what should I say? How can I refuse to speak? Certainly I can say that I will be as steadfast as I

585 The implication is that Jochi was a useless person.

586 The teachings of the great hat were the duties and obligations of a Qan, the hat being a symbol of authority (see Section 103, p. 82, n. 209).

am able to be. Later on, however, there may be born among my descendants [some] who

even if wrapped in sedge
would not be eaten by a cow,
and even if wrapped in fat
would not be eaten by a dog.[587]

Such people would miss an elk crosswise and a rat lengthwise.[588] Such is my response—what more [can] I say?' At these words Chinggis Qahan issued a decree, saying, These words that Ögödei has spoken will suffice.' He continued: 'What do you say, Tolui? Speak.' Tolui replied: 'At the side of my elder brother, named by the Qahan [our] father,

I [shall be] a faithful companion,
reminding him of things that he has forgotten
and waking him [when] he has slept.
I shall become the whip of his chestnut horse,
and never fail to answer to your summons.
I shall not break ranks.
I shall campaign for him in distant places
and fight for him close by.'

When [Tolui] had finished saying this, Chinggis Qahan expressed his approval and issued the following decree: 'Let one of Qasar's descendants govern, let one of Alchidai's descendants govern, let one of Otchigin's descendants govern, and let one of Belgütei's descendants

587 The implication is that such people would be unworthy.

588 I.e., they would miss both easy targets (such as an elk viewed sideways) and difficult targets (such as an escaping rat). Ögödei means that although he can promise to be a worthy ruler, he cannot guarantee that his descendants will also be so. He therefore requests support, which is offered in the following speeches by Tolui and Chinggis Qahan.

govern.[589] With one of my descendants governing, you cannot go wrong if you observe my decree and refrain from changing it. Even if Ögödei's descendants were born [such that they]

would not be eaten by a cow
though wrapped in sedge
or eaten by a dog
though wrapped in fat,

surely one of my descendants will be born good?' So he decreed.

[256] While riding out [to fight], Chinggis Qahan sent emissaries to Burqan of the Tangqut people to say: 'You, said, "I wish to be your right hand." The Golden Rein [of my authority] has been severed by the Sarta'ul people. I am riding out to settle scores [with the rebels]. Become the right hand [of my army] and ride out.' After [Chinggis Qahan] had sent [this message], before Burqan could utter a word, Ashagambu said: 'Since [Chinggis Qahan's] might is impotent, why did he go so far as to become Qan?' He therefore refused to provide extra soldiers. With boastful words, he sent back [the emissaries]. Chinggis Qahan said: 'How can I allow Asha-gambu to speak to me in this way?' He also said: 'What difficulties would we encounter if I at once sent [soldiers] to make a detour in his direction? [But] we are intent on [subduing] a different people for the time being. That is enough. If I am protected by Eternal Heaven, when I return, I shall definitely pull firmly on [my] Golden Rein and [settle] this [other matter].'

[257] In the Year of the Hare,[590] Chinggis Qahan rode out against the Sarta'ul people. He crossed the Arai.[591] From among the ladies, he took Qulan-qatun [with him] on the campaign. From among his younger brothers, he put Otchigin-noyan in charge of the main base-camp before riding out. He sent Jebe as a vanguard, Sübe'etei as Jebe's

589 The descendants will govern the entire nation, i.e., the Mongol state.

rearguard, and Toquchar as Sübe'etei's rearguard. Before sending them, he told the three men: 'Skirt the Sultan's [positions] and get on the far side of him. Wait for us so that we can attack jointly.' Jebe skirted the cities of Qan-Melik without touching them. Sübe'etei followed suit. [However,] Toquchar, in the rear, raided Qan-Melik's border cities and plundered his farmers. Because his cities had been raided, Qan-Melik turned his back [on us] and moved off to join Jalaldin-soltan. Together, Jalaldin-soltan and Qan-Melik rode out to oppose Chinggis Qahan. Shigi-qutuqu acted as Chinggis Qahan's vanguard. Jalaldin-soltan and Qan-Melik overcame Shigi-qutuqu and pressed on in the direction of Chinggis Qahan. As they advanced, however, Jebe, Sübe'etei, and Toquchar came up behind them and vanquished and slaughtered them. They prevented them from joining [together] in the cities [of] Buqar,[592] Semisgab,[593] and Udarar,[594] overcame them, and pursued them as far as the Shin[595] River.[596] Jalaldin-soltan and Qan-Melik] lost many of their own Sarta'ul in the river, into which they fell and then drowned. Jalaldin-soltan and Qan-Melik saved their own skins and escaped upstream along the Shin River. Chinggis Qahan went upstream along the river, plundered /Bat-kesen,[597] and proceeded further] After reaching the Eke Stream and the

590 in 1219.

591 Alai. See Section 198.

592 Bukhara.

593 Samarkand.

594 Otrar.

595 Indus.

596 For details of these locations, see Dorontib 1980, pp. 398–399, n. 8–11.

597 Badakhshan. Bat-kesen was famous for its precious stones. See Dorontib 1980, p. 399, n. 13.

598 Parvan.

599 Baru'an.

600 Amu Darya or Oxus.

Ge'ün Stream, he pitched camp on the Baru'an[598] Steppe. He sent Bala of the Jalayirs to pursue Jalaldin-soltan and Qan-Melik. Bestowing great favours on both Jebe and Sübe'etei, [Chinggis Qahan said]: 'Jebe, you were given the name Jirqo'adai, [but] when you came over from the Tayichi'uts, you became Jebe. Toquchar raided Qan-Melik's border cities of his own will and caused [QanMelik] to rebel. As a matter of ordinance, I shall execute him.' After having said this, however, rather than execute [Toquchar] he fiercely reprimanded him, punished him, and demoted him from his command.

[258] And so Chinggis Qahan, returning from the Barula[599] Steppe, said to [his] sons Jochi, Cha'adai, and Ögödei: 'Cross the Amui River[600] with the soldiers of the right flank and attack the city [of] Ürünggechi.'[601] So he sent them. To Tolui he said: 'Attack the cities of Iru,[602] Isebür,603 and other of the many towns.' So he sent him. Chinggis Qahan himself occupied the city of Udirar.[604] Jochi, Cha'adai, and Ögödei sent a petition: 'Our soldiers are completely ready. We have arrived at the city [of] Ürünggechi. Whose command should we follow?' Chinggis Qahan responded to the petition with a decree that he sent [to them]: 'Follow Ögödei's command.'

[259] So Chinggis Qahan brought the city [of] Udarar[605] into submission. Moving out of Udarar, he occupied the

601 Urgench Gurganj. Ürünggechi (Örünggechi in Section 260) was the capital of Khwarizm, southwest of the Ural Sea. See Murakami 1970–1976, vol. 3, pp. 224–225, n. 3.

602 Merv.

603 Nisapür.

604 Utarar.

605 Utarar.

606 Probably Bala Cherbi.

607 'Golden grave' in Orkhon Turkish.

608 Sistan.

609 Chükhcheren, Herat.

610 *Öchen meljin* in the text should read *önjin meljin,* 'a long struggle'. See Choiji 1984, p. 469, n. 3.

city [of] Semisgab. Moving out of Semisgab, he occupied the city [of] Buqar. Chinggis Qahan spent the summer waiting for Bala[606] at the ridge of Altan-qorqan,[607] in the summer quarters of the Soltan. He sent emissaries to tell Tolui: The weather has become hot. The other soldiers are also pitching camp, [so come] and join us.' Tolui had taken Iru, Isebür, and other cities and had demolished the city [of] Sisten.[608] The emissaries [arrived] while he was attacking the city of Chüqcheren.609 After they had delivered the message, Tolui first finished destroying the city [of] Chüqcheren and then returned, pitched camp, and joined Chinggis Qahan.

[260] The three sons, Jochi, Cha'adai, and Ögödei, brought the city [of] Örünggechi into submission and divided its people among themselves, [but] failed to set aside a share for Chinggis Qahan. When they returned and dismounted, Chinggis Qahan reprimanded them, and waited three days before according them an audience. Bo'orchu, Muqali, and Shigi-qutuqu petitioned him as follows: 'We brought down the Soltan of the Sarta'ul people. After a long struggle, we took his people and cities.[610] The city [of] Örünggechi, taken by [your] sons and divided among themselves, belongs, together with the sons who took it, to Chinggis Qahan. Heaven and Earth increased [our] strength and brought the Sarta'ul people to their knees. Your men and geldings are busily rejoicing. Why are you so angry? [Your] sons know that they have done wrong and are afraid. Teach them how to [behave] in future. We are afraid that being negligent will harm your sons' characters. If you show them favour and grant them an audience, would not that [solve the problem]?' After hearing their petition, Chinggis Qahan calmed down and granted [his] three sons Jochi, Cha'adai, and Ögödei an audience. He reprimanded them,

citing old men['s] words,
quoting ancient words,

until they almost sank into the ground on which they stood and were unable to wipe the sweat from their brow. He shouted [at them] in admonition. While he was claiming their attention, Qongqai-qorchi, Qongtaqar-qorchi, and Chormaqan-qorchi, the three quiver-bearers, petitioned Chinggis Qahan as follows: 'Like young falcons about to enter training, [your] sons are on the point of learning how to go to war. Why [then] do you reprimand [your] sons, and constantly dishearten them? We fear that [your] sons, being afraid, will neglect their thoughts. [Our] enemies extend from [where] the sun sets to [where] it rises. When you incite us, your huge sheep-hounds,[611] to go out [against] the enemy, Heaven and Earth increase our strength and our one wish is to bring you gold, silver, satin, and [other] goods, together with people and kinsmen. If you ask, 'Which people?', we reply that the presence of Qalibai-soltan of the Baqtat[612] people[613] is reported in the west—let us go to war [against him].' Thus petitioned, the Qahan's [anger against his sons] abated and he calmed down. He approved [the suggestion by Qongqai-qorchi, Qongtaqar-qorchi, and Chormaqanqorchi] and issued the following decree in favour of the three quiver-bearers: 'Let Qongqai of the Adargin and Qongtaqar of the Dolonggir be at my side.' He sent Chormaqan of the Öteged to attack the Baqtat people and Qalibai-soltan.

[261] He also sent Dörbei-doqshin of the Dörbets to attack [the cities of] Aru[614] and Maru[615] and the city [of]

611 The Chinese interlinear note gives 'Tibetan dogs' for *töbödüt noqod*. However, *töböd* (plural töbödüt) meant '(large) sheep dog' in the Orkhon Turkish dialect. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 268–269.

612 Baghdad.

613 The Qalibai-soltan was the Abbasid Caliph of Baghdad. Caliph was the highest title of Islamic secular and ecclesiastical rulers in the Middle Ages. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 168.

614 Iru, Herat.

Abtu of the Madasari people, [all of which lay] between the [lands of] the Hindu people and the Baqtat people.[616]

[262] He sent Sübe'etei-ba'atur northwards to attack the lands and peoples [of] the following eleven tribes:[617] the Kanglins, Kibcha'uts, Bajigits, Orusuts, Majarats, Asuts, Sasuts, Serkesüts, Keshimirs, Bolars, and Rarals.[618] [He made] Sübe'etei-ba'atur cross the great waters [of the] Idil[619] and the Jayaq[620] Rivers and go as far as Kiwa Menkermen.[621]

[263] After conquering the Sarta'ul people, Chinggis Qahan issued a decree placing resident commanders in all

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615 Merv.

616 Aru is a mistake for Iru, i.e., Heret, and Maru is Merv or Mari (see Jagchid-Sechin 1979, p. 406, n. 3). It is not clear where Abtu was; it may be a form of Alamut, a city of the Mazandaran (see Murakami 1970–1976, vol. 3, pp. 238–239, n. 4). The Madasari were the Mazandaran (see Murakami 1970–1976, vol. 3, pp. 238–239, n. 4).

617 The Kanglin, i.e., Qangli, were a Turkish confederacy in the steppes north of the Caspian and Aral Seas (see Jagchid-Sechin 1979, p. 407, n. 1; and Peter Jackson, review, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies,* vol. 56, 1993, p. 165). The Kibcha'uts (Qipchaq) were Turkish nomads living on the southern Russian steppe (see Jagchid-Sechin 1979, p. 407, n. 2). For the Bajigit, see Cleaves 1982, p. 203, n. 119. For the Orusut, see Jagchid-Sechin 1979, pp. 407–408, n. 4. The Majarats were the Hungarians (see Jagchid-Sechin 1979, p. 408, n. 5). The Asuts lived in the northern Caucasus (see Jagchid-Sechin 1979, p. 408, n. 6). For the Sasuts, see Cleaves 1982, p. 203, n. 123. The Serkesüts (Circassians) also lived in the northern Caucasus (see Jagchid-Sechin 1979, p. 408, n. 8). For the Keshimirs, see Jagchid-Sechin 1979, p. 408, n. 9, and Cleaves 1982, p. 203, n. 125. The Bolars (mistranscribed as Buqar in Section 270) were the Bulgars; they lived east of the Volga (see Jagchid-Sechin 1979, p. 408, n. 10). For the Rarals (a mistranscription of Kerel, correctly written in Section 270), see Jagchid-Sechin 1979, p. 408, n. 11.

618 Kerel.

619 Volga.

620 Ural.

621 The wooden city of Kiwa, i.e., Kiev.

the various cities. From the city [of] Ürünggechi came a father and son, called Yalawachi and Masqut, of the Qurumshi clan [of the] Sarta'ul.[622] They told Chinggis Qahan [about] the customs and laws of the city. Knowing that they had mastered the laws and customs, [Chinggis Qahan] put [Yalawachi's] son, the Qurumshi Masqut, in charge, together with our resident commanders of various cities, including Buqar, Semisgen, Ürünggechi, Udan,[623] Kisqar,[624] Uiryang,[625] and Güsen-daril.[626] He brought [Masqut's] father to the city of Jungdu of the Kitads and put him in charge of it. Because Yalawachi and Masqut of the Sartaqtai people were able [to explain] the laws and customs of the city, [Chinggis Qahan] put them in charge of the Kitad people, alongside the resident commanders.

[264] [Chinggis Qahan] spent seven years among the Sarta'ul people. While he was waiting there for Bala of the Jalayirs, Bala crossed the Shin River and pursued both

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622Yalawachi, a proper name, meant 'envoy' or 'prophet' in the Orkhon Turkish dialect (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 306). For details of his son's name, see Jagchid-Sechin 1979, p. 410, n. 3. The name of their clan, transcribed as the Qurumshi, should actually be Xwar(i)zmi (see Cleaves 1982, p. 203, n. 131). The Qurumshi were Muslims (Sarta'ul).

623 Khotan.

624 Kashgar.

625 Yarkend.

626 Buqar, Semisgen, and Ürünggechi have already been mentioned in Sections 258, 259; for Buqar is an error for Bolan, see note 657. Udan, also known as Hetian or Khotan, was in Chinese Turkestan (see Jagchid-Sechin 1979, p. 410, n. 6, and Cleaves 1982, p. 204, n. 135). Kisqar is the Turkish city of Kasgar (Kashgar) (see Cleaves 1982, p. 204, n. 136). Uriyang is the Turkish city of Yarkend (see Cleaves 1982, p. 204, n. 137). For Güsen-daril (Küsen-tarim), see Cleaves 1982, p. 204, n. 138.

627 Irtysh.

628 This actually happened in the spring of 1225. See Saishiyal 1987, pp. 892–893, n. 30.

629 Spent in the lands of the Sarta'ul.

630 1225.

Jalaldin-soltan and Qan-Melik to the land of the Hindus. [There] he lost them and was unable [to find them again], [even though] he searched right into the heart of the [land of] the Hindus. Returning, Bala plundered the people on the edge [of the Hindus' territory] and returned with many camels and castrated goats. Then Chinggis Qahan returned [to his own lands], summering along the way on the Erdish[627] [River]. In the autumn[628] of the seventh year, [629] the Year of the Cock,[630] he pitched camp at the palaces in the Qara-tün on the Tu'ula [River].



CHAPTER TWELVE

[265] After spending the winter [there], Chinggis Qahan said: 'Let us ride out against the Tangqut[631] people.' He counted [his men] afresh, and, in the autumn of the Year of the Dog,[632] rode out against the Tangqut people. From among his ladies, he chose Yisüi-qatun to accompany him. On the way, [in the course of] the winter, while riding his Josotu-boro,[633] he hunted numerous wild horses in Arbuqa.[634] [Once], as the wild horses charged by, Josotu-boro shied and Chinggis Qahan fell. His flesh hurt, so tents were pitched at Cho'orqat,[635] where they spent the night. The next morning, Yisüi-qatun said: 'Princes and lords, [you must] talk together. The Qahan has passed the night hot [with fever].' After the princes and lords had

631 Tangut.

632 1226. By that time, the Mongols were already fighting in the Tangqut area, so the hunting would have taken place in 1225. See Saishiyal 1987, pp. 941–942, n. 4.

633 A reddish grey horse.

634 Arbuqa is in the northwestern part of the Ordos region, on the great bend of the Yellow River (called Qatun Gol, 'Queen's River', in Mongolian). There is a mountain called Arbis or Arbus. *Bis* in the word Arbis is a more recent form of the archaic *bus.* Q and s were once interchangeable in Mongolian; Arbuq is thus an older form of Arbis.

635 Cho'orqat is about 30 kilometres to the east of Arbuqa (see n. 634, above). Arbuqa, or Mount Arbus, is in the Ordos region. For details, see Eldengtei et al. 1991, pp. 467–474.

assembled, Tolun-cherbi of the Qongqotads made the following suggestion: The Tangqut people have

solid cities
and established camps.

They will not depart with their solidly built cities on their backs; they will not depart without their established camps. We will withdraw, but when the Qahan's fever has cooled, we will ride out against them.' After he had said this, all the princes and lords approved his words and petitioned Chinggis Qahan. [But] Chinggis Qahan responded: The Tangqut people will say that our hearts have failed us and that we have turned back. We should send an emissary to them and nurse [my] illness[636] [here] at Cho'orqat. If we withdraw after considering their reply, so be it.' He therefore sent an emissary with the following message: 'Last year, you, Burqan, said: "We Tangqut people wish to be your right-flank [army]." I sent [a message] requesting [your help]. In it, I said: "The Sarta'ul people have not entered into agreement with me. Let us ride out [against them]." [However,] you failed to keep your word and to give me soldiers. [Instead,] you came and mocked [me]. [At the time] I was heading elsewhere, [but] I said that I would settle scores with you. I rode out against the Sarta'ul people and, protected by Eternal Heaven, brought them to heel. Now, I intend to come and settle scores [with you].' After [Chinggis Qahan] had sent [this message], Burqan said: 'I did not mock you.' Asha-gambu said: 'It was I who mocked [you]. By now, you Mongqols [should] have learned [how] to fight. If you say, "Let us fight," I have a camp in the Alashai[637]

636 *Elchin,* i.e., *ebchin,* 'illness'.

637 The Alashai was the name of a mountain range also called Qulan, 'wild ass'. See Eldengtei and Ardajab 1986, p. 885, n. 18. The Alashai Mountains were said to have the appearance of a piebold horse. See Murakami 1970–1976, vol. 3, pp. 265–266, n. 6.

with latticed yurts[638]
and laden camels,

[so] head towards the Alashai and do battle with me. If you need gold, silver, satins, and [other] goods, head for Eriqaya[639] or Eri-je'ü [instead]'.[640] With these words, he returned [the emissary]. When this message was delivered to Chinggis Qahan, [still] hot [with fever], Chinggis said: 'This is [too much]. How can we now withdraw, in the face of his boasting? Even [if it means that] I must die, I have no choice other than to confront his boastful words. Let us act.' He [also] said: 'Let Eternal Heaven be in charge.' Chinggis Qahan headed for Alashai, where he fought with Asha-gambu. He overcame Asha-gambu, who was forced to barricade [himself] on the Alashai. He took Asha-gambu and destroyed his people,

with latticed yurts,
with laden camels,

until they blew [in the wind] like ash. [Then] he issued the following decree: 'Slaughter the powerful, courageous, good, [but] fickle Tangquts. Capture and hold as many of the Tangquts as you can, [and give them] to the men of [our] army.'

[266] Chinggis Qahan spent the summer on Mount Chasutu.[641] He sent soldiers [against] those of the Tangquts who had climbed the mountain with Asha-gambu, those who had rebelled, those

638 For *terme gertü,* 'latticed tents', see Section 184, p. 159, n. 415.

639 The city of Eri-qaya (Irqai, Irghai) is now called Yinquan and is in China's present-day Ningxia Province. Erijie'ü, now called Wuwei, is also in Ningxia. See Jagchid-Sechin 1979, p. 417 n. 8.

640 These towns were known to be prosperous.

641 'Snowy', i.e., the Hunchui Shan, in northwestern China.

with latticed yurts,
with laden camels,

until they were destroyed as planned. After doing so, he showed favour to both Bo'orchu and Muqali: Take until you [can carry no more].' He also showed favour to Bo'orchu and Muqali[642] in another decree: 'Because I gave you none of the Kitad people, you [may] take the Jüyins of the Kitad people and divide them equally between you. Make their fine sons follow you as you go, holding your falcons. Raise their fine daughters to arrange your wives' skirts. The Qara-kitad Jüyin people were the trusted intimates of Altan-qan of the Kitad people. They destroyed the forefathers and fathers of the Mongqols. Now, Bo'orchu and Muqali are my trusted intimates.' So he decreed.

[267] Chinggis Qahan moved out from Mount Chasutu and set up camp in the city [of] Uraqai. [After] leaving Uraqai, and while destroying the city [of] Dörmegei,[643] Burqancame for an audience with Chinggis Qahan. During the audience, Burqan [presented Chinggis Qahan with a set of gifts]: first among them were golden images of the Buddha. They also included bowls and vessels of gold and silver, nine of each; boys and girls, nine of each; and geldings and camels, nine of each. Various [other things], also arranged in nines by kind or colour, [were presented] in the course of the audience. Chinggis Qahan held the audience with the felt door closed, [so that Burqan remained outside].[644] In the course of the audience, he felt an inward revulsion. On the third day, Chinggis Qahan issued a decree giving the name of Shidurqu to Iluqu-

642 Bo'orchu died in 1225–1226, a year or so before Chinggis. Muqali died in 1223. In using their names, Chinggis was probably referring to their sons.

643 Uraqai has not been identified, but Dörmegei, known as Lingzhou by the Chinese, was the secondary capital of Xixia, a small kingdom located in northwestern China. See Murakami 1970–1976, vol. 3, pp. 269–270, n. 13.

burqan.[645] After the visit by Iluqu-burqan Shidurqu, Chinggis Qahan said that he wanted Iluqu killed.[646] He told Tolun-cherbi: 'Lay hold of him and kill him.' When Toluncherbi reported that he had laid hold of Iluqu and suffocated him, Chinggis Qahan issued the following decree: 'When I came to the Tangqut people to settle scores with them and my flesh pained [me] as we hunted the wild horses of Arbuqa along the way, it was Tolun who said: "Let it heal." He was concerned [about] my life and body, and offered words [of counsel]. [Hearing] the enemy's poisonous words, we were made stronger by Eternal Heaven. We took revenge and brought them under our control. Let Tolun take these [gifts] of Iluqu—the mobile palace and the bowls and vessels.'

[268] [Chinggis Qahan] plundered the Tangqut people, [changed] Iluqu-burqan's [name to] Shidurqu, and suffocated him. He then destroyed the mothers and fathers of the Tangquts even to the seed of their seed. He then issued the following decree: 'While we eat, let us talk [of how] we made them die and [of how] we destroyed them. Let us say: "That was the end, they are no more."' Because the Tangqut people made promises that they failed to keep, Chinggis Qahan hunted them down for a second

644 New information suggests that by the time that Burqan (later known as Li Xian or Shidurgu) had his audience with Chinggis Qahan, the latter had already died (on August 25, 1227). The'audience' with the dead ruler was conducted with the felt door closed. For details, see Saishiyal 1987, p. 913. Chinggis was hardly the sort of person to hide behind a curtain. It is therefore probably true that he was dead at the time of the 'audience'.

645 There are probably two reasons why Chinggis Qahan changed the name of the defeated Tangqut ruler. First, he was unhappy with the term Burqan, a word applied to someone belonging to the fifth generation above ego and later a term meaning 'Buddha', especially as Iluqu had come bearing gifts and religious icons. Second, by calling him Shidurqu, 'loyal', Chinggis hoped to ensure the loyalty of Shidurqu's descendants towards his own descendants, despite Shidurqu's execution.

time. After destroying them, he returned. In the Year of the Pig, he rose to Heaven.[647] After he had risen, many of the Tangqut people were given to Yisüi-qatun.

[269] In the Year of the Rat,[648] Cha'adai, Batu,[649] and other princes of the right hand, Otchigin-noyan, Yegü, Yisüngge, and other princes of the left hand, and Tolui and other princes of the centre, together with the princesses, the sons-in-law, and the commanders of the ten thousand [households] and the thousand [households], assembled [in their] entirety at Köde'ü-aral[650] on the Kelüren [River]. In accordance with the decree in which Chinggis Qahan had named him, they raised up Ögödei-qahan as Qan.[651] Afterwards, [Ögödei-qahan's] elder brother Cha'adai and [his younger brother] Tolui handed over to Ögödei-qahan the night-guards, quiver-bearers, and eight thousand sentries who had guarded the golden life of their father, Chinggis Qahan, and the ten thousand personal guards who had served at the side of my father the qan.[652] They also handed over to him the central [part] of the [Mongol] nation.

[270] After being raised up as Qan and assigning to himself the ten thousand guards who serve inside [the palace] and the central part of the nation, Ögödei-qahan consulted with [his] elder brother Cha'adai before [taking further steps]. He sent Oqotur and Mönggetü to act as rearguard for Chormaqan-qorchi, who was campaigning against the Qalibai-soltan[653] of the Baqtat people, not yet

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646 By this time, Chinggis was actually dead.

647 Chinggis Qahan died in 1227, on the twelfth day of the seventh lunar month, i.e., August 25, in Qingshui District, Gansu Province, northwestern China.

648 1228.

649 Jochi's second son.

650 See n. 382, Section 282.

651 In September 1228. At the time, Ögödei-qahan was 43 years old.

652 The author is expressing his feelings towards Chinggis.

653 Qalibai, i.e., Caliph.

[subdued] by his father Chinggis Qahan. Sübe'etei-ba'atur, who was waging war against various cities, including Meket, [654] Men-kermen, and Keyibe[655] after crossing the great waters of the Adil and Jayaq [Rivers], had already reached as far as [the lands of] the Kanglin,[656] Kibcha'ut, Bajigit, Orusut, Asut, Sesüt [Sasud], Majar, Keshimir, Sergesüts, Buqar,[657] and Kerel peoples.[658] Sübe'etei-ba'atur found himself difficulties with these peoples, [so] [Ögödei-qahan] had Batu, Büri, Güyük, Möngge, and many other princes ride out to act as rearguard for Sübe'etei. He issued the following decree: 'Batu shall be in command of all those princes who take part in the campaign.' He issued [a further] decree: 'Güyük shall command those from the centre [army].' [He then said:] 'Let the princes who are in charge of a domain send the eldest of their sons on this campaign. Let the princes who are not in charge of a domain, together with the commanders of the ten thousands, the thousands, the hundreds, and the tens and many [other] people, whoever they may be, also send their eldest sons on the campaign. Let the princesses and the [imperial] sons-in-law send the eldest of their sons on the campaign.' After issuing this decree, Ögödei-qahan said: '[My] elder brother Cha'adai suggested this principle of sending the eldest sons to join the campaign. Cha'adai told me: "I have sent Büri, the eldest of my sons, to campaign as Sübe'etei's rearguard. If the eldest sons campaign and if large numbers of soldiers go forth, morale will be high and the army will be strong. The enemy command many realms, beyond which are terrible people who are capable of dying by their own weapons once they become angry. Their weapons are said to be very sharp." Such were his words.' [Then] Ögödei-qahan said: 'Let us send out the

654 Meked, Magas.

655 Kiev.

656 Qangli.

657 Bolar.

658 These peoples are discussed in p. 253, n. 617.

eldest sons, [in line with] elder brother Cha'adai's counsel and zealous strength.' He issued [this decree] in every quarter. In this way, he sent Batu, Büri, Güyük, Möngge, and the other princes to [join Sübe'etei's] campaign.

[271] Again, Ögödei-qahan sent [word] to [his] elder brother, Cha'adai, and requested his counsel: 'I have sat [on the throne] made ready for me by my father Chinggis Qahan. But will it be said of me, "By virtue of what skills did he sit [there] ?" Elder brother Cha'adai, if you approve, I will ride out against the Kitad people, [for] the Qahan our father failed [to reduce] Altan-qan of the Kitad people.' When he received [this request] for counsel, [Ögödei-qahan's] elder brother Cha'adai responded by approving: 'What trouble will there be? Put [a trustworthy man] in charge of [your] base-camp and ride out. I will select soldiers and send them [to you].' After putting Oldaqar-qorchi[659] [in charge of] the great palaces,

[272] Ögödei-qahan rode out against the Kitad people in the Year of the Hare.[660] He put Jebe[661] in the vanguard. And so he overcame the Kitads' soldiers, slaughtering them until they piled up like rotten logs. While crossing the Chabchiyal, he sent out soldiers in all directions to surround and attack [the Kitads'] towns and cities. Ögödei-qahan [then] set up camp at Shira-dektür,[662] where he fell ill, lost [the use of] [his] mouth and tongue, and was in [great] distress. Various shamans and soothsayers made the following divination: The spirit-lords of the Kitad people's lands and waters rage violently [against the Qahan], [for] their kinsmen have been plundered and their towns and cities have been destroyed. We should give

659 For Oldaqar-qorchi, see De Rachewiltz 1971–1984, vol. 31, p. 61.

660 1231.

661 Jebe actually died in or around 1225. See Mansang 1985, pp. 405–406, n. 23. According to Li Zefen 1970, p. 584, Jebe died in 1224. To scare the enemy, Ögödei was still using Jebe's name in 1231.

662 As did Chinggis, too. See Section 247.

people, kinsmen, gold, silver, livestock, and food in [the Qahan's] stead.' But despite their divination, [the spirit-lords] failed to release Ögödei and [continued] to rage violently. They then asked by means of divination: 'Would a kinsman suffice [as an offering]?' At this point, the Qahan opened his eyes and requested water. After drinking it, he asked: 'What happened?' The shamans answered: The spirit-lords of the Kitad people's lands and waters were raging violently [against you] [because] their lands and waters have been destroyed and their kinsmen plundered. We asked by means of divination: "What other substitute can we give?" Thereupon, you suffered violent cramps. [However,] they released [their hold on you] when we asked: "Would a kinsman suffice [as an offering]?" Now we leave it to you to decree your decision.' [Ögödei] then issued the following decree: 'Who among the princes is beside [me]?' Prince Tolui, who was beside him, said: 'Although you have both elder brothers and younger brothers, our fortunate father Chinggis Qahan chose you, elder brother the Qahan, as one [would choose] a gelding, he felt you as one [would feel] a wether. Pointing you in the direction of his great throne, he placed upon you the burden of the many peoples. As for me, I was told, being in the presence of [my] elder brother the Qahan, to serve [by]

reminding you of things you have forgotten,
by waking you [when] you have slept.

Now, [my] elder brother the Qahan, if I should lose you, whom should I remind of things forgotten, whom should I wake [when] they have slept? If the Qahan my elder brother dies,

the many Mongqol people
will be orphaned
and the Kitad people
[will gain] the satisfaction of revenge.

I will take the place of the Qahan, [my] elder brother.

I have split the trout's back
and sliced the sturgeon's back.
I overcame Ile
and impaled Qada.[663]
My face is handsome
and my back is long.

Shamans, perform your spells and swear your oaths.' After the shamans had sworn their oaths, Prince Tolui drank the oath-swearing water. After sitting for a moment, he said: 'I have become drunk. Until I wake from my drunken state, I leave it to you, [my] elder brother the Qahan, to take care of [your] young and orphaned younger brothers and your widowed sister-in-law, until they gain intelligence and character. I have said everything [I wish to say]. I am drunk.' He then went out and left. In this way, he died.[664]

[273] So [Ögödei], after defeating Altan-qan, gave him the name of Se'üse.[665] After plundering the Kitads' gold, silver,

663 Ile (Yile Pu'a) and Qada (Wanyan Hada) were two of the three high-ranking officials appointed by the Altan-qan to fight the Mongols. (See Chapter 11.) They were garrisoned at Dengzhou alongside the finest army of the Jin Dynasty, but wished to return to the capital, Bianjing. Most cities between Dengzhou and Bianjing had submitted to the Mongols and the army had few supplies and little support. On January 16, 1232, they arrived at Junzhou (present-day Yuxian in Henan Province) and were attacked by Tolui and the Mongol army, which had moved forwards without waiting for Ögödei-qahan. The ensuing battle, one of the most famous of the Mongol-Jin battles, was won by Tolui. Ile and Qada were captured and executed. For details, see Li Zefen 1970, p. 518 and Section 251.

664 Tolui took Ögödei Qahan's place (by offering himself to the spirit-lords) and died late in 1232. In his final speech, he seemed to offer two reasons for why he should take his brother's place. First, he had probably committed worse deeds (the trout and sturgeon in his poem represent innocent victims); second, he was tall and handsome—a fitting sacrifice. For these ideas and further details, see De Rachewiltz 1971–1984, vol. 31, pp. 65–66.

golden and figured satins and [other] goods, piebald horses, and serving boys, [Ögödei] appointed scouts and garrison commanders. After appointing resident commanders to Namging, Jungdu, and cities in various quarters,[666] he returned peacefully and set up camp at Qara-qorum.[667]

[274] Chormaqan-qorchi subdued the Baqtat people. Knowing that the land was said to be good and its possessions fine, Ögödei-qahan issued the following decree: 'Chormaqan-qorchi shall remain there as garrison commander. Each year, he shall make [the people] send [me] yellow gold, gilt, naqut,[668] brocades and damasks, small pearls, large pearls, sleek Arab horses with long necks and tall legs, dull brown work-horses, camels, small-humped camels, pack-mules and [riding] mules.' Batu, Büri, Güyük, Möngge, and the many other princes campaigning in the rearguard of Sübe'etei-ba'atur reduced the Kanglin, Kibcha'ud, and Bajigid [peoples] to submission and, after [crossing] the Ejil and Jayaq [Rivers] [669] to destroy the city [of] Meget, wiped out the Orusut [people]. They plundered the people of Asut, Sesüt, Bolar, Man-kerman, Kiwa, and other cities, [reducing them] to a state of submission. After appointing resident commanders and garrison commanders, they returned. [Ögödei-qahan] sent Yisüder-qorchi to serve as a rearguard for Jalayirtai-qorchi, who had been campaigning against the Jürchets

and the Solongqas.[670] He issued the following decree: ‘Let [Yisüder-qorchi] stay [there] as garrison commander.’

[275] From the Kibchaq campaign,[671] Batu sent an emissary to petition Ögödei-qahan: ‘By the strength of Eternal Heaven and the fortune of the Qahan, [my] uncle, I have destroyed the city [of] Meget, plundered the Orusut people, and reduced eleven [foreign] countries and [their] peoples to submission. After withdrawing and pulling in the golden reins, we decided to hold a feast [before] departing. We erected a great tent. During the feasting, I was the first to drink one of two bowls of ceremonial wine, being somewhat the eldest of these princes. Because of this, both Büri and Güyük acted badly towards me; they failed to take part in the feast and [instead] rode off. As they rode off, Büri said: ‘Why did Batu drink first, in spite of being [our] equal?

We should push with [our] heels
and trample with [our] insteps
old women with beards [timid like him]
who become [our] equals.

Güyük said: ‘Let us beat the breasts of those old women [like him] with thorny sticks.’ Eljigidei’s son Harqasun said: ‘Let us stick wooden tails on them.’[672] Büri and Güyük spoke in this way to us, who had been made to ride out against rebellious people of a different race, while were

665 The Altan-qan’s personal name was Shouxu (Aizong). Although *se’üse* means ‘serving boy’ or ‘son’ (see Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 237), Ögödei Qahan may not so much have renamed the Altan-qan as reinterpreted or punned on his original name in a derogatory way. See De Rachewiltz 1971–1984, vol. 31, p. 66.

666 He did this in 1232.

667 Qara-qorum was not built until 1235–1236.

668 Gold brocade.

669 Ejil is another form of the Mongol name for the Volga (Idil). The Jayaq was, as noted earlier, the Ural.

discussing whether [the campaign] had been conducted successfully and well. We dispersed without reaching a mutual understanding. Now I leave it to my uncle, the Qahan, to decide the matter.'

[276] Hearing Batu's words, the Qahan became very angry and refused Güyük an audience. He said: 'Who has incited this inferior person to insult a man who is [his] senior? Let him rot [like] an abandoned egg. He rebels against [that] same man, his senior.

I shall make of him a scout,
so that he must climb
city [walls] like mountains,
until his ten fingernails drop off.
I shall make of him a garrison commander,
so that he must climb
hard-pounded city [walls]
until his five fingernails splinter.

As for you, Harqasun, wicked and lowly, whom were you imitating when you insulted our kinsman? I will send both Güyük and Harqasun [into exile]. I would have executed Harqasun, but you would have said that I was prejudiced [in Güyük's favour]. As for Büri, tell Batu to send him to [my] elder brother Cha'adai and to inform Cha'adai [of his words]. Let elder brother Cha'adai decide [this matter].'

[277] [Then] Mönggei,[673] acting on behalf of the princes, and Alchidai, Qongqortai, and Janggi, acting on behalf of the lords, [together] with a number of other lords, petitioned [Ögödei-qahan] with the following proposal: '[According to] a decree issued by your father, Chinggis Qahan, matters of the field should be judged only in the field and matters of the home should be judged only in the home. The Qahan is angry with Güyük, [but] this is a

670 The Koreans. This campaign took place in 1258.

671 1236–1242.

672 A wooden tail will constantly beat the wearer.

matter of the field. If the Qahan favours us, would it [not] suffice to send [Güyük] to Batu and rely on [Batu's judgment]?' The Qahan agreed, and calmed down. He gave Güyük an audience, and reprimanded him: 'It is said that on the way, while travelling to the battle-field,

you did not spare the buttocks
of [any] man with buttocks.

It is [also] said that

you broke the morale
of [each] man in the army.

[Do you imagine that] the Orusut people submitted because they feared your wrath and anger? [Is it your belief] that you alone caused the Orusut people to submit that makes you so arrogant as to act hostilely towards a man who is your senior? According to a decree of Chinggis Qahan our father: Many [people] cause one to fear, deep [waters] cause one to die.[674] Were those not his words? You [act] as though you had won [the victory] on your own, [but] you were protected by both Sübe'etei and Büjek. You attacked together with the entire army in order to reduce the Orusuts and Kibcha'uts to submission. You captured one or two Orusuts and Kibcha'uts, [but] you have not yet gained [even] the hoof of a kid; [even so,] you flaunt your manliness. Having left the yurt [only] once, you [act] as though you had achieved everything single-handedly and speak your provoking words. [But] Mönggei, Alchidai, Qongqortai, Janggi, and the others,

being my good companions,
have calmed [my] angry heart.

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673 Mönggei was Tolui's son and a future Qahan (r. 1251–1259). See Dorontib 1979, p. 411, n. 17.

[Like] a broad spoon
[they] have calmed my overflowing cauldron.

Enough! They say that it is a field matter for Batu [to decide]. I leave both Güyük and Harqasun to Batu.' And he sent [them to him]. [Then] he said: 'I leave Büri to elder brother Cha'adai.'

[278] Again, Ögödei-qahan issued a decree: '[This] decree newly proclaims the duties of all the guards—the nightguards, quiver-bearers, and sentries—who served my father Chinggis Qahan. They shall continue to serve as they formerly served, according to the decree of the Qahan [my] father.' He [then] said: 'According to the old rule, the quiverbearers and sentries are to follow their own paths [during] the day and, at sun[set], yield to the night-guards and spend the night outside.' He [then] said: The night-guards shall spend the night with us. Let the night-guards stand at the door and around the yurt and patrol in front of and behind the palace. Let them seize any man who moves in the night, after the sun has set, and [hold] him until the night is spent. After the multitude has scattered, let them seize any man other than the duty guards who enters and mingles with them, split open his head, and throw him to one side. If a man comes with an urgent message in the night, let him tell the night-guards. Let him stand together with the nightguards at the rear of the yurt and report [to me]. Let Qongqortai, Shiraqan, and other [administrators], together with the night-guards, take charge of comings and goings at the palace yurt. [It is] said that Eljigidei, although worthy of trust, was seized by the night-guards when he walked behind them. The night-guards in whom trust is vested should not countermand my decrees.' He then said: 'Let [no one] ask how many night-guards there are or walk

674 According to another explanation of this passage, the reference is to 'many dangers' (a comment on Chinggis' life) and 'deep death' (a set phrase meaning 'a great calamity'). See Eldengtei and Ardajab 1986, p. 928, ns. 9 and 10.

behind their post. Let [no one] walk beside the night-guards. Let the nightguards seize [any] man who walks behind or beside them. If a man asks how many night-guards there are, let the nightguards take the gelding that he rode that day and the saddle and bridle, together with the clothes that he has worn. Let [no one], whoever [it may be], sit at the night-guards' post. Let the night-guards look after the banners, drums, pikes, spears, bowls, and vessels. Let them organise the drink, food, and uncut meat.' [Then] he decreed: 'Let the night-guards take care of the palace yurt-carts. If We fail to campaign in person, let the night-guards not campaign separately and apart from Us. While We are falconing or hunting, let half of them remain with the palace yurt-carts and half of them go with Us. Let the camp administrators among the nightguards go [ahead] to set up the palace [yurt]. Let the doorkeeper night-guards stand close by the door. Let Qada'an, the [commander of] one thousand, take charge of the entire [company of] night-guards.' Again, he appointed commanders for the various shifts of night-guards, [saying]: 'Let Qada'an and Bulaqadar form one shift and consult together. Let them enter [into service] and organise [their men] [so that] they take up positions to the right and left of the palace. Let Amal[675] and Chanar consult together, form one shift, enter into [service], and organise [their men] [so that they] take up positions to the left and right of the palace. Let Qadai and Qori-qachar consult together, form one shift, enter into [service], and organise [their men] [so that] they take up positions to the left and right of the palace. Let Yalbaq and Qara'udar consult together, form one shift, enter into [service], and organise [their men] [so that] they take up positions to the left and right of the palace.

'Let the shifts under Qada'an and Bulqadar and under Amal and Chanar camp and enter [their] turn of service to the left of the palace. Let the shifts under Qadai and Qoriqachar and under Yalbaq and Qara'udar camp and enter [their] turn of service to the right of the palace.'

And he said: 'Let Qada'an command these four shifts of night-guards. Let the night-guards stand around the palace, [right] next to my person, and let them lie down close to the door. Let two men from among the night-guards enter the palace and present the [kumiss] flasks.' Again he said: 'Let Yisün-tö'e, Bükidei, Horqudaq, and Lablaqa, the four quiver-bearers, form separate shifts. Let them organise the quiver-bearers from [among] their followers and join the four separate shifts of sentries, carrying [their] quivers.' He also appointed elders to the shifts of sentries from among the children of those who had formerly been in command. He said: 'Let Alchidai and Qongqortaqai, who were formerly in charge [of the sentries], consult together, organise a shift of sentries, and enter it [into my service]. Let Temüder and Jegü consult together, organise a shift of sentries, and enter it [into my service]. Let Mangqutai, who used to command the rearguard, organise a shift of sentries and enter it [into my service].' He also issued the following decree: 'Eljigidei shall be the senior commander; the commanders shall follow Eljigidei's orders.' Again he decreed: 'If a man abandons a shift after he has entered [into service] on it, let [his commander] instruct him with three [strokes of] the rod, [in accordance with] the old decree. If the same man abandons a shift for a second time, let [his commander] instruct him with seven [strokes of] the rod. If the same man abandons a shift for a third time without due cause, such as illness, and without consulting the senior shift officer, and if he finds it [too] difficult to serve Us, then instruct him with thirty-seven [strokes] of the rod and send him to a remote place, out of my sight. If the elders of the shift fail to register the guards [serving] on the shift, [thus] neglecting [their turn of service], we will punish the elders. Let the shift elders announce this decree to the guards at every third shift, when [shifts] are changed. If guards abandon a shift in spite of hearing [this] decree, we will

675 Emel. See Section 141.

punish them in accordance with the rule [announced in this] decree. If the shift elders fail to make this decree known to the guards, they will themselves be guilty. The shift elders shall not punish guards who entered [into my service] on an equal [footing] [with them] simply because they are [now] senior [to them], unless they receive my permission to do so. If senior officers breach [this decree], [let their action] be reported to Us. I shall execute those who deserve to be killed. I shall instruct those who deserve to be punished. If the senior officers lay hands on [the guards] without first telling [me], simply because they are [now] [the guards'] seniors, they shall be repaid [in kind] - a rod for a rod, a fist for a fist.' Then he issued [a further] decree: 'My guards are higher [in rank] than the leaders of the thousands outside [the palace] and their attendants are higher [in rank] than the leaders of the hundreds and the tens outside [the palace]. If the leaders of the thousands outside [the palace] dispute with my guards, they shall be punished.'

[279] Again, Ögödei-qahan said: 'I shall not let suffer the nation that my father, Chinggis Qahan, established [through his] suffering. Instead I shall rest

their feet on the earth,
their hands on the ground,[676]

and let them rejoice. Sitting [on the throne] made ready by my father the Qahan, I have no [wish] to make the people suffer. Let them contribute one three-year-old sheep each year from [their] herds to make [my] soup. Let them contribute one sheep from [every] hundred to the poor and needy within their own [military district]. Furthermore, how can kumiss be levied from the people on every [occasion] when [my] elder and younger brothers gather together with all their men, geldings, and guards? Let [the men of] the thousands in the various quarters provide mares and milk them. Those who milk them shall also herd them. Let the camp organisers provide constant replacement [mares]; let them be the herders of foals and colts. When [my] elder

and younger brothers gather, I shall bestow rewards and gifts upon them. I shall pour satins, [silver] ingots, quivers, bows, breastplates, and weapons into the store-houses and set [men] to guard [them]. I shall choose store-keepers and grain-keepers from the various quarters and set them to guard [the stores]. I shall divide up the pastures[677] and give them to the people [of] the nation. Does it not make sense to choose camp organisers from the various thousands and settle them on the pastures? In the Chöl[678] lands, there are only wild beasts. For those people who inhabit the wide [open spaces], let the camp organisers, headed by Chanai and Ui'urtai, dig wells and fence them in. [At present,] our messengers gallop across people's [settlements] and [thus not only] delay [our] official business [but] cause suffering to the people [of] the nation. We shall now settle [this matter] once and for all by providing post-station keepers and post-horse keepers from among the various thousands in every quarter and establishing post-stations at various places. Does it not make sense for our messengers to gallop along [the lines of] post-stations rather than across the people's [settlements], except in urgent cases? When Chanai and Bolqadar, who understand [these things], made [these suggestions] to Us, I thought that they were right and said: "Let elder brother Cha'adai decide whether the suggestions deserve to be implemented and whether he approves them."[679] When I sent the suggestions to him, elder brother Cha'adai [replied]: "You ask my opinion on these matters. I approve all [of the suggestions]. Act in accordance with them." Elder brother Cha'adai sent a further [message] saying: "I will have poststations [established] here that join [yours] to mine. I will send a messenger to Batu and get him to [establish] poststations that join [his to mine]." He

676 The meaning of this poem is that the people no longer need go to war—they can stop riding horses ('feet on the ground') and digging in for battle ('hands on the ground').

677 *Nuntuq usu,* literally 'camp (or pasture) waters', is a compound meaning 'pastures (and their contents)'.

sent [the following message]: "Of all the matters [that have been discussed], establishing post-stations is the most suitable proposal."'

[280] Ögödei-qahan then said: 'Elder brother Cha'adai, Batu, and the other princes of the right hand, all my elder and younger brothers; Otchigin-noyan, Yegü, and the others, all my elder and younger brothers of the left hand; the princes, princesses, and [imperial] sons-in-law of the centre; the commanders of the ten thousand, the thousand, the hundred, and the ten [households]—all have approved. When they approved, [they agreed that] it was nothing to provide one three-year-old wether each year from [their] herds for the Dalai[680] Qahan's soup, and that it is good to provide one three-year-old sheep from [every] hundred sheep for the poor and needy. When we provide post-station keepers and post-horse keepers for the post-stations that we have established, the people will be able to live in peace and the messengers will be able to travel easily. They all said that they approved.' After consultation, elder brother Cha'adai approved the Qahan's decree. In accordance with the Qahan's decree, each year the people from the thousands in the various quarters provided one three-year-old sheep from [their] herds for [the Qahan's] soup and one three-yearold wether from [every] hundred [for the poor and needy]. He had them supply mares and assigned people to herd the foals and colts. He had them provide herders of foals and colts, store-keepers, grain-keepers, post-station keepers, and post-horse keepers. He got them to measure the locations of the various stages [along the route] and to establish the poststations. He put Arajan[681] and Toquchar in charge, and provided [exactly] twenty post-horse keepers at each of the stages [where there were] post-stations and roughly twenty post-horse keepers at each of the [other] stages.

678 Desert.

679 Since Cha'adai was older than Ögödei, Ögödei was required by etiquette to ask his older brother's opinion.

Then he issued the following decree: 'From here, I have set quotas for the numbers of post-horse geldings, of sheep for provisions, of milch mares, of oxen to be harnessed to the carts, and of the carts [themselves].

If [even] a short string is missing,
I will divide [the goods of the thief]
right down the middle,[682] and condemn him.
If [even] a spoon-shaped spoke[683] is missing,
I will divide [the thief] down [the line of his] nose,
and condemn him.

[281] Ögödei-qahan said: 'Sitting on [my] father's great throne, the deeds that I have accomplished since my father ['s reign] [include] campaigning against the Jaqut people. [684] I finished off the Jaqut people. My second deed was to establish post-stations [so that] our messengers [can] gallop swiftly towards their goal and transport our necessities. My third deed was to have wells dug in places without water and to bring [the water] forth. I provided the people [of] the nation with a sufficiency of water and grass. My fourth deed was to post scouts and garrison commanders among the people of cities in all quarters and to permit the people [of the] nation to rest

[their] feet on the earth,
[their] hands on the ground.

I have let them live. I have added four deeds to [those of my] father the Qahan. However, since having been made to sit on the great throne by the Qahan my father and taking responsibility on my shoulders for his many people now that he has gone, [my first] fault was to be conquered by wine. My second fault was to listen without reason to

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680 Dalai, 'sea' or 'ocean', meant, by extension, 'vast, great'. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, pp. 275–6, and De Rachewiltz 1971–1984, vol. 31, p. 83.

681 Arachayan or Arasen. (See Cleaves 1982, p. 226.)

women's words and to have the girls of the nation of Otchigin, [my] father's brother, brought [to me]. In spite of being Qahan, lord of the nation, I committed wrong acts without [any] cause to do so. Another of my faults was to harm Doqolqu secretly. "Why was [that] a fault?" you may ask. It was wrong to harm Doqolqu secretly,[685] for he had fought bravely in front of his rightful [master], my father the Qahan. Who fights bravely in front of me, today? I blame myself for having secretly harmed the man who diligently adhered to principle in the presence of my father the Qahan and of all [the Mongqols], and for failing to appreciate [him]. Furthermore, being covetous, and fearing that the wild beasts, born with their destiny determined by Heaven and Earth, would advance onto [the lands of my] elder and younger brother, I had fences and walls constructed. While preventing [the beasts from straying], I heard words of complaint from [my] elder and younger brothers. [This], too, was a fault. So since the [reign of the]

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682 'Right down the middle' renders *ör qol. Ör* meant 'pit of the stomach, heart', while *qol* meant 'centre'. The Qahan meant that half of the thief's possessions would be confiscated. See Eldengtei et al. 1980, p. 127.

683 A 'spoon-shaped spoke' *(qalbuqa kekesün)* was presumably a small, flat piece of wood. The point of the two images (the short string and the spoke) is that Ögödei demands total honesty and obedience on the part of his men, however trivial the issue.

684 The Jaqut people were the inhabitants of northern China.

685 For Doqolqu, see De Rachewiltz 1971–1984, vol. 31, p. 88.

686 The seventh month of 1228.

687 Dolo'an-boldaq is now called Dolood, 'seven'. Köde'e-aral is now called Bayan Ulaan Uul, 'Rich Red Mountain'. These places are in eastern Mongolia. For details, see Ts. Damdinsürüng 1975, pp. 14 and 16.

688 *Shilginchek*, here used (by way of exception) as a place name, meant a high, narrow hill. For the explanation 'between two Shilgincheks', see the article by Bürinbatu in the Academic Journal of the University of Inner Mongolia, no. 4 (1994), pp. 66–70.

Qahan my father, I added four [good] deeds [to his achievements] and did four wrongs.'

[282] [We] finished writing [this History] at the time of the Great Assembly, in the Year of the Rat and the Month of the Roebuck,[686] when the palaces were being set up at Dolo'anboldaq of Köde'e-aral[687] on the Kelüren [River] between two [places called] Shilginchek.[688]



APPENDIX

The Arts of War under Chinggis Qahan[689]

In the thirteenth century, all Mongols thought themselves to be the centre of the universe, a belief that they derived from their Shamanistic religion. A Shamanist worshipped natural things: the sky, the sun, the moon, rivers and mountains, etc. Heaven was both their guide and their consciousness; thus every Shamanist was born free and equal. Chinggis was, like any other Mongol, a Shamanist, and he treated every Mongol equally.

The Mongols, under Chinggis's command, were united to face the challenges of their day. Their strength lay in their unity, and the way in which they deployed their hunting skills and pursued their nomadic economy. Always superb horsemen, their iron discipline, high morale and fine leadership ensured that, as a cavalry force, they were beyond compare. Special attention was paid to the welfare of the soldiers. Chinggis Qahan once said:

'My soldiers are as numerous as forests, and their women could form a large unit within the army. I want to feed them with juicy meat, let them live in beautiful yurts, and let them pasture their livestock on rich soil.'

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689 Source: Dalintai [Dalantai], *Menggu bingxue yanjiu: Jian lun Chengjisihan yong bing zhi mi* [Research into the Mongol art of war: The strategy of Chinggis Qahan], Chengde: Junshi kexue chubanshe, 1990.

He was known for his personal concern for his men, and was careful not to drive them beyond the limits of their endurance.

Because the population of Mongolia was so small (some say it was over one million; I am inclined to put it at two million), human life was very precious. One can see from Chinggis's tactics that the Mongols tended to avoid hand-tohand fighting in order to minimise casualties among their soldiers. If a Mongol soldier was killed due to carelessness, his commander would be punished; if a wounded Mongol soldier was left on the battlefield, his troop leader would be executed on the spot. In December 1241, the Mongols, under Prince Batu (the founder of the Golden Horde), entered Hungary and fought a major battle on the banks of the Sayo River. Because of the delay in sending rafts to the river banks, some twenty Mongol soldiers lost their lives. Prince Batu strongly reprimanded his second-in-command, the famous general Sübe'etei (one of the Four Hounds of Chinggis), for the delay, though some say that Sübe'etei and his soldiers arrived late only because they were building bridges over the Sayo.

What is clear is that Chinggis cared greatly for his soldiers. With 129,000 Mongol cavalrymen he conducted wars in foreign countries for more than twenty years, his golden rule being that of 'mutual loyalty'. Because of the way in which he treated his troops, he was able to maintain fairly constant numbers of men under arms.

Through their network of spies, traders and informers, Chinggis and his generals built up an exceptional understanding of the economic, military, and political conditions of the countries they wanted to attack. It was said that in the mornings, when the air was at its clearest, a Mongol could see for up to four or five miles and hear the sound of hoofs up to twenty miles away. Even in recent times, a horseman could ride from Ulaan-Baatar to Kalgan in nine days—a distance of some 600 miles. In 1221, Chinggis's army rode 130 miles from Bamian to Ghazna, by way of Kabul, in two days. Every man learned to ride

from the age of three, and served in the army from the age of fourteen until he was sixty.

Chinggis's Arts of War were based on five key elements: speed, suddenness, ferocity, variety of tactics, and iron discipline.

Marco Polo tells us that a Mongol cavalryman often slept mounted and armed while his gelding grazed, and that he could go ten days without cooking food. On such occasions he lived on ten pounds of dried milk-curd, two litres of kumiss, and a quantity of cured meat. A Mongol soldier had three or four spare geldings, and would not ride a gelding until it had rested for three or four days. The Mongols took their herds of cows and sheep with them when they went on campaigns. If they went short of food, they hunted wild beasts.

In 1211, when Chinggis attacked the Jin territory in northern China, his army comprised about 110,000 Mongol soldiers. In 1219, when the Mongol army moved into Kwarizm territory, the army numbered some 150,000 soldiers (some say only 90,000), but to these he had added many auxiliaries, including Kurds, Turks, Turkomans, and even Chinese. Chinggis Qahan never liked to fight on a second front unless absolutely necessary, preferring instead to concentrate his forces on one front at a time.

Chinggis Qahan's Sixteen Military Tactics

[l] Crow Soldiers and Scattered Stars Tactics (also known as Ocean Waves Tactics)

When facing the enemy, the army would split into small groups consisting of three to five soldiers to avoid being surrounded. When the enemy regrouped, the Mongols too regrouped. They were to appear suddenly, like something dropping from the sky, and disappear like lightning. The attack would be signalled by a shout or the crack of a whip. One hundred cavalrymen could surround one thousand enemy soldiers and one thousand cavalrymen could control a front thirty-three miles long in order to attack the enemy at the right place and the right moment.

[2] The Cavalrymen Charge Tactics (also known as Chisel Attack Tactics)

A group of cavalrymen would make a direct charge into the enemy line. If the first charge failed, a second and even third group would attack. No matter how great the opposition, even if they numbered a hundred thousand, they were unable to withstand the charges. Finally, in response to a signal, the Mongol cavalrymen would charge from all directions into the enemy lines in order to destroy their formation.

[3] Archers' Tactics

The archers, armed with shields, dismounted from their geldings and shot at the enemy, sometimes using the geldings as shelter. Other archers shot from horseback. (The horses were trained to stop dead in mid-gallop to allow the archer to take aim.) Once the enemy came under fire, their lines would be broken and they would scatter in disorder. At that point, the cavalrymen would attack.

[4] Throw-Into-Disorder Tactics

If the enemy was strong on the battlefield or sheltering in a fort, the Mongols would herd oxen and wild horses into the enemy lines to cause confusion.

[5] Wearing-Down Tactics

When the enemy stood in a defensive position with spears planted in a row, thus preventing a cavalry charge into the line, the Mongols would withdraw their main forces, leaving only a few small detachments to harass the enemy by shooting arrows into the spear-held line. Due to lack of food, water, and rest, the enemy would eventually have to move. Once the weary forces were on the march, the Mongol army would launch a surprise attack.

[6] Confusing and Intimidating

In 1204, Chinggis Qahan ordered his soldiers to set up camp on the Sa'ari Steppe in western Mongolia. Every able-bodied man lit five fires some distance apart, thus scaring the Naimans and enabling Chinggis to defeat them.

When the Mongols encountered numerically superior forces, they often sent troops to stir up dust behind their own lines by means of branches tied to the tails of their

horses. On seeing the dust, the enemy often believed that large reinforcements were at hand and fled.

The Mongols also mounted stuffed dummies, small Mongol children, and females on the spare horses to suggest that the army was much bigger than it actually was. This trick was used by the Mongol general Shigi-qutuqu in 1221, when he engaged Jaldin at Biruan between Kabul and Ghazna.

[7] Luring into Ambushes

As soon as battle started, the Mongol soldiers would feign retreat, deliberately throwing away gold and silver and other impedimenta. Such tactics were used sparingly—for example, if they could not break into heavily fortified cities or through a strong pass. In 1211, when the Mongols first attacked the Jin territory in northern China, Chinggis Qahan sent Jebe and Güyigü Nek ahead to attack the famous Chabchiyal Pass. The Mongols could not break through this pass because it backed onto mountain cliffs and was strongly fortified. Instead they decided to lure the enemy out by slowly retreating. The Jin army thought that the Mongols had given up, so they chased after them and were surprised, after a certain distance, to see the retreating soldiers suddenly turn to counter-attack. At that moment, the main Mongol army appeared from all sides in a pre-arranged ambush and slaughtered the enemy until their bodies piled up as far as Chibchayal, 'like rotten logs'. Jebe stormed the gate of Chibchayal and took the pass.

In May 1222, the Mongol generals Jebe and Sübe'etei and 20,000 Mongol cavalrymen pursued the fleeing Kypchaks (or Cumans) from the western side of the Caspian Sea towards the northwest, to Kiev. The Mongols met the joint forces of the Russians and the Cumans, 30, 000 men, on the eastern bank of the Dnieper River. Some say that Sübe'etei, with only 2,000 Mongol cavalry, lured the Russians and Cumans for nine days towards the small Kalka River that flows into the Sea of Azov, where the main Mongol cavalrymen (numbering 20,000) were waiting. Under the direction of Jebe and Sübe'etei, the Mongols

attacked the enemy at the end of May and destroyed most of their forces.

[8] Arc Formation Tactics

The Mongols would send out two detachments in a wide curve, like the tips of a bow, but with the main forces staying at the centre of the arc, hiding in shady places to await the enemy. These two detachments went ahead to engage the enemy, shooting to infuriate them and lure them to where the main forces were waiting. These two detachments also closed in from the flanks or from behind the enemy. The Mongols called these tactics 'bow tactics'. The Cossacks also used these tactics to defeat their enemies.

[9] Lightning Attack And Surprise Attack

These two tactics were perhaps the most important of all: lightning attack meant speed, and surprise attack meant suddenness. In 1203, the Mongols attacked Ong Qan, who had erected a golden yurt and was feasting. For three nights and three days, under Chinggis' command, they fought, and in the end Ong Qan and his son fled, though his entire army surrendered. This was an example of Chinggis 'surprise attack' tactics.

In 1213, the Mongol army, commanded by Jebe, failed to take the city of Dongchang (Mukden), so they retreated for six days over a distance of some 170 miles. The enemy defending the city thought that the Mongols had given up, but Jebe returned, covering the distance in one night and launching a surprise attack.

[10] Outflanking Tactics (a)

When the Mongol cavalrymen could not attack the enemy from the front, they would leave a small detachment to draw the attention of the enemy. Meanwhile the main force went round the back, by way of difficult paths, to attack the enemy from the rear. There are two examples in the History to illustrate these tactics. In 1207, Chinggis Qahan ordered Dörbei-doqshin to attack the Tümet people in the northern part of Mongolia. He left a small detachment on the main road, and ordered his best soldiers to travel along paths made by wild animals. They

climbed the highest mountain and then suddenly descended as if from heaven, finishing the enemy while they were feasting.

In 1213, when the Mongol cavalrymen under Chinggis Qahan wanted to take the Chabchiyal Pass, the Jin army fortified the pass and spread iron spikes along the road to the north to prevent the advance of the geldings. The entrance to the pass was also reinforced by an iron gate. Chinggis left a small detachment to shoot at the Jin army, and then took his main army west and back to the southern end of the pass. He captured a place called Nankou, and went on to take the pass.

[11] Encircling Tactics

Chinggis used these tactics many times in order to destroy his enemies. The tactics were based on the enemy's strengths and formations. If the enemy openly exposed his flank and rear, and the city defenders were weak, the Mongols would encircle them from all sides. If the enemy deployed their forces by the rivers, exposing two or three flanks, then the Mongols would encircle them from all sides of the river bank.

In 1221, Chinggis destroyed Jalaldin Mangubirdi, who had deployed his soldiers on the west bank of the Indus, by attacking on two or three sides. Plano Carpini (who was in Mongolia in 1246) records that the Mongols always sent the captured personnel and non-Mongol soldiers in first, led by a few Mongols, to fight the encircled enemy. Only then would the strong regular army appear, as if from nowhere, to reinforce the stronghold, outflank the enemy on both wings, and destroy him.

[12] Open-the-End Tactics

If the enemy was very strong and ready to fight to the death, the Mongols would leave a gap in their ranks. In this way, the enemy might think they could see an escape route, scatter, and start to run. At that precise moment, the Mongols would fix upon a suitable place to kill the fleeing enemy.

[13] Combining Swords and Arrows

The Mongols avoided hand-to-hand fighting if at all possible, preferring to use bows and arrows, with a range of 200 to 300 yards, to kill the enemy. Plano Carpini records:

If at all possible, the Mongols never engage in hand-tohand fighting. They always first use arrows to kill the enemy and their horses. After killing or wounding the enemy and their horses, making them too weak to fight, the Mongols move in to finish them off.

[14] Hot Pursuit Tactics and Dispersing Tactics

If winning, the Mongols would pursue the enemy so that no one escaped alive. If losing, they would disperse in all directions, so that the enemy was unable to catch them.

[15] Bush Clump Tactics

These tactics involved dividing the soldiers into many small groups which, although keeping in contact with each other, maintained a low profile as they advanced. Such tactics were also used at night-time, and on dark or cloudy days.

[16] Outflanking Tactics (b)

The Mongols faced a march of more than 1,500 miles to their goal in Bukhara and Samarkand. The Khwarazem Shah had deployed his forces along the Syr Darya River. The Mongols divided their forces into four contingents, three of which moved to face the Shah across the Syr Darya. The fourth and largest contingent, commanded by Chinggis himself, turned north and then due west into the Kizil Kum Desert, instead of turning south. There were neither roads nor water in this region. For several months, Chinggis made his way secretly across the desert, while the Shah's forces were being worn out on the battlefront. In March 1218, Chinggis approached Bukhara from more than 400 miles behind enemy lines. This campaign is regarded by military historians as one of the most dramatic outflanking manoeuvres of all times.



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The numbers after the names refer to the sections of the text in which they occur. The following abbreviations are used: cl=clan; ct=city; lk =lake; mt=mountain; peop=people; pers=person; pl=place; rv=river; tr=tribe; is=isle. In ancient Mongolian texts, the consonants D and T; K.Q. and G; S and G were interchangeable.